



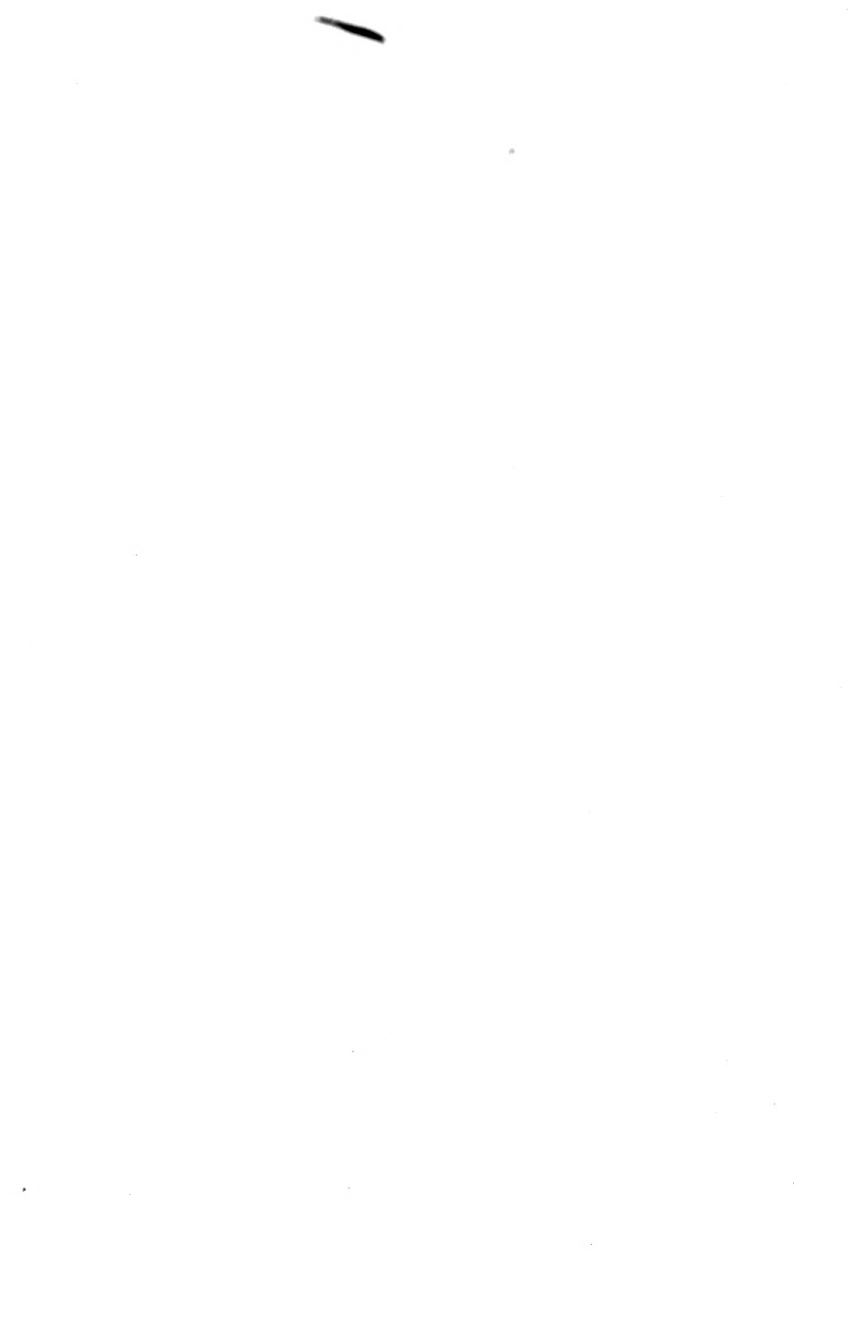
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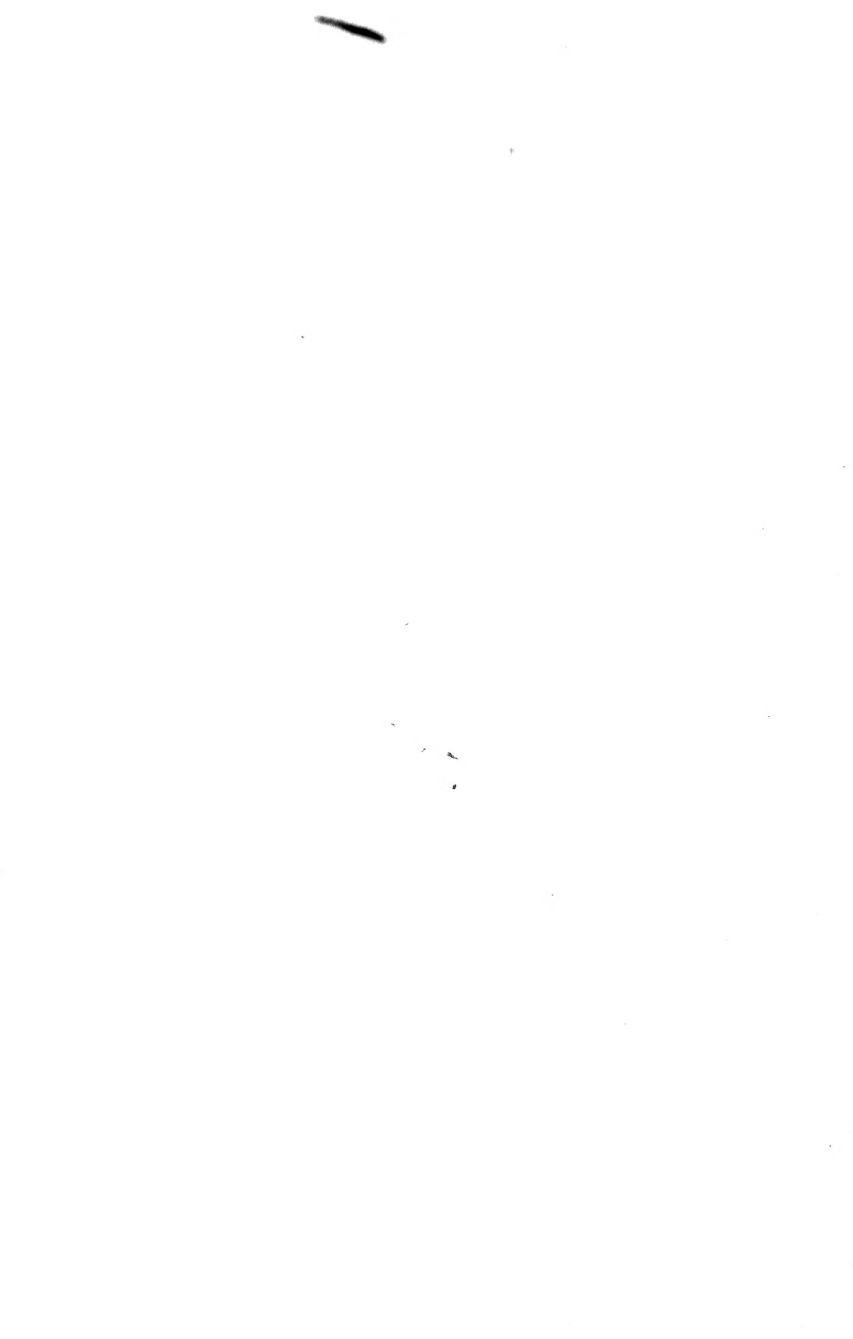








CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS



A LIFE OF

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

By FRANC B. WILKIE

6226 X

CHICAGO

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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

CHAPTER I

CURIOUS, STRANGE, AND CONTRADICTORY

Christopher Columbus is a figure in history which presents all the variations, the shiftings, the many-colored lights of a kaleidoscope. He has no fixed name in the language of the nation. He is Columbus, Columbo, Colon, Colonus; he is Christoval Colon, and Christopher Columbus.

He is claimed by the residents of several places as having been born in their respective localities; he was descended from noble families, and his father was a humble wool-comber. He was educated at a university, he assisted his father in his lowly occupation. He was a student, a wool-comber, and a sailor at the immature age of fourteen years. He was familiar with geography, and yet, as the facts subsequently established, he scarcely knew its simplest rudiments. These are only a few of the contrarieties in his life as recorded in history.

He discovered America, and yet he did nothing of the kind. This Northern half of the American Continent is about to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of a discovery which he never made. The enormous region known as North America, he did not discover, he never even dreamed of its existence.

He did not undertake his voyage influenced by the slightest idea that a new world was to be found ; it was a different approach to an old world, India, that he sought, and he died in the belief that it was the coasts of India that he had encountered ; hence the name "West Indies" given to the islands that confronted him as he sailed westward.

He was a tramp, a pauper, a beggar, a viceroy with unlimited wealth, a satrap with power to bind and loose, and a mendicant spurned from the gates of the rich and noble. He was a ragged, bare-footed vagrant, and the welcome guest in the palaces of royalty, and the bosom friend of kings and queens. He was despised, and inundated with adulation. His fame was wreathed with golden decorations intended to do him honor, and with rusty chains of iron calculated to inflict on him humiliation and disgrace. He dined from vessels of precious metal, and munched crusts in

squalor in the slums and by the lonely roadside of the country across which he journeyed, weary and footsore.

He died, this great man, and to-day, no one knows with any certainty where his ashes are interred. Several cities claim the honor; it is only known that he died in one continent, that his remains were shipped to another, that he was buried in a certain place; that long after the relics were removed, as claimed by some, and that it was the grave of some other person which gave up its contents, as is asserted by others.

Such are some of the salient things connected with the birth, life, death and sepulture of a character whose anniversary the civilized nations are about to celebrate with a splendor, a magnificence, and grandeur of dimensions never before extended to any human being.

It is with the facts, so far as they may be attainable, of this marvelous development of the fifteenth century, that these pages will deal, and the writer hopes that such of the public as may accompany him, may find the labor at once pleasant and instructive.

CHAPTER II

GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Much was surmised, guessed at, dreamed of, and speculated about concerning the shape of the earth, the respective extent of its land and water. Civilization was limited mainly to the region lying along the northern shores of the Mediterranean.

The shape of the earth was a disputed question. That it was a globe was believed by but a few; the priesthood, as a rule, averred that the theory of the sphericity of the earth was an absurdity, for the reason that if it were true one half the people would be standing with their heads hanging down, which was a physical impossibility. The religious elements asserted that such a conclusion was contrary to the teachings of the Bible, and hence its belief was blasphemous and heretical.

The known area of the earth was limited in its dimensions. Europe was fairly mapped

out ; Africa was, in the first half of the century known along its western shores for a short distance south of the Mediterranean Sea ; and it was not till the last quarter of the century that a Portuguese navigator rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and staved the prevalent belief that Africa extended to the "jumping off" limits of the earth.

The existence of a portion of Asia was known to the Venetians and other Italians who carried on with India a lucrative trade. The distance, however, was very great, being on rivers, seas, and by caravans. Could the same points in southern Asia be reached by water, the cost of the transportation of Indian products would be immeasurably lessened. The general conviction that Africa extends out to the end of the world, for centuries forbade an attempt to sail around it to reach India.

The further borders of India were the themes of startling legends and fanciful conjectures. It was believed to be the El Dorado of the earth, in which abounded, beyond exhaustion, all the precious metals, stones, pearls, useful minerals, spices, perfumes, textile stuffs, the plumage of birds, and, in fine, all the natural materials which constitute wealth, and which are demanded to satisfy the wants of luxury.

All these beliefs had been stimulated by vague reports emanating from the remoter portions of India visited by commercial "drummers" in their search for goods. Marco Polo had left statements of what he had seen in farther India; of islands abounding in gold, of cities marvelous in their great dimensions, the beauty of their architecture, and the splendors and opulence of the natives.

In their attempts to reach India the nations interested were led by Portugal, whose ambition in the direction of discovery on the ocean excelled that of all other peoples. During the reign of John I. his son, Prince Henry, became interested in the scheme of circumnavigating Africa, and gathered about him eminent men familiar with astronomy and navigation, believing that by this course he could open an easy route to the sources of the fabled wealth of Western India. Irving says:—

"The effects of these proceedings were soon apparent. All that was known relative to geography and navigation was gathered together and reduced to system. A vast improvement took place in maps. The compass was also brought into more general use, especially among the Portuguese, rendering the mariner more bold and venturous, by enabling him to

navigate in the most gloomy day and in the darkest night. The Portuguese marine became signalized for the hardihood of its enterprises and the extent of its discoveries. The region of the tropics was penetrated and divested of its fancied terrors, and the Azores Islands, which lay three hundred leagues distant from the continent, were rescued from the oblivious empire of the ocean."

Unfortunately Prince Henry died some thirty years before the first voyage of Columbus, but his life and actions had stimulated the Portuguese ambition for discovery, and that people, says a writer, "were the wonder and admiration of the Fifteenth Century, and Portugal, from being one of the least among nations, suddenly rose to be one of the most important. * * * The fame of the Portuguese discoveries, and of the expeditions continually setting out, drew the attention of the world. Strangers from all parts, the learned, the curious, and the adventurous, resorted to Lisbon to inquire into the particulars or participate in the advantages of these enterprises."

Among the other hundreds of thousands who were attracted by the splendid achievements of Portugal, and who went there, was Christopher Columbus.

CHAPTER III

THE BIRTHPLACES OF THE DISCOVERER

It is the general conclusion that Columbus was born in Genoa, in about 1445, and that he was the son of a humble wool-comber, and the eldest of four children, three of whom were boys. There has been, however, a wide difference of opinion on this point of place of birth.

As in the case of Homer, many cities claimed Columbus dead in which, when living, he had received no recognition. The States of Placentia, and those of Piedmont both claimed to be entitled to the honor of having given birth to the famous navigator, although the first-named provinces failed to present their evidence till nearly two hundred years after Columbus had discovered the West India Islands.

An examination of the evidence presented by Placentia, made by a committee of experts from the Genoese Academy of Sciences, as late as 1812, elicited the fact that the claim was to

the effect that Columbus was born in a small place known as Pradello. It was established that the great grandfather of Columbus was the owner of some property in that place, and that the rent was paid to members of the Columbus family living in Genoa. Nothing, however, was discovered which connected the navigator with Pradello further than this remote ownership of some property.

Piedmont made a much more plausible showing than Placentia. It was proved that a Columbus was living in Montferrat, at the date of the birth of Christopher, and who was asserted to be the son of Dominico Columbo, the resident of Montferrat. It was proved in a suit instituted by a descendant of this Dominico Columbo, who sought to secure the estates of Christopher Columbus, when his line became extinct, that there were two men named Dominico Columbo, and that the one at Montferrat was not the father of the navigator.

It was finally decided that he was born in Genoa, but whether in the city itself, or in some other part of the Genoese territory has never been determined. A half a dozen towns whose names are known have presented claims, in Genoese territory, and a greater number of

others whose names are unknown. Among the former are Savona, Cogoleto, Oneglia, Bogliasco, and Finale. From time to time each of these towns has held first place in the contest for the birthplace of Columbus. Savona, although not in the field as a contestant, till a late day, 1826, made a magnificent burst of speed, and, in the opinion of its friends, won the prize.

Bellero an advocate of Savona, in a letter, published in May 1826, says :—

"It is an admitted fact that Dominico Columbo was, for many years a resident and citizen of Savona in which place one Christopher Columbus is shown to have signed a document in 1472.

"A public square in the city bore the name of Platea Columbi, toward the end of the sixteenth century, and it was shown that the Ligurian government gave the name of *Jurisdizione di Columbi* to that district of the republic, under the belief that the great navigator was a native of Savona; and that Columbus gave the name of Savona to a little island, adjacent to *Hispaniola*, among his earliest discoveries."

The letter of Signor Bellero quotes a large number of authorities to establish the claims of Savona; but despite this, posterity, in the

case of the majority, has agreed to unite on the city of Genoa as the birthplace of Columbus. The locality of his birthplace plays no important part whatever in the results of his living. It is not the place where he was born, or in which he died, or was finally buried which cuts any figure in his services. He might have leaped out of the darkness of the past, at the moment he appeared at Lisbon, and the world would have missed nothing of value if the obscurity of his origin had never been penetrated.

It is said by Prescott in "Ferdinand and Isabella":—

"The discrepancies among the earliest authorities are such as to render hopeless any attempt to settle with precision the chronology of Columbus' movements previous to his first voyage." It was in 1470 that Columbus went to Portugal where he remained fourteen years.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS

Very little is positively known of the early life of Columbus, except two or three points upon which there is a certain amount of agreement between the various writers. There is no doubt that his parents were very poor, and that his education was limited mainly to such studies as would fit him for the life of a sailor.

It is asserted by some writers that he had some knowledge of Latin, drawing, geometry, geography, astronomy, and navigation. He had a few months at the University of Pavia; and at the age of fourteen he went to sea. It is stated by some authorities that his career as a sailor was more or less connected with transactions of a piratical character. It is also said that during periods when he was ashore, between his various voyages, he was engaged as a book seller and a map pedler, in Genoa.

Fancy the great genius that discovered America acting as a book agent!

When Columbus was twenty-four years of age, according to some authorities, Alphonso of Aragon, King of Naples, threatened an invasion of Genoa. An appeal was made to Charles, King of France, Italy refusing to assist the menaced city. The king sent John, of Anjou, who took command of the town and placed the city in a condition of defense.

Alphonso died before the preparations for the attack had been completed, and the assault on Genoa was abandoned. Immediately afterward, John, of Anjou, undertook to attack Naples for the recovery of the crown. The people of Genoa sided with him, furnishing him with ships and money. It is stated that Columbus served in this army and played a very gallant part.

While in Portugal Columbus joined the expedition of the Portuguese ships which were making explorations along the eastern African coast. They landed at Porto Santo, of the Madeiras which was governed by Perestrello, who had been a captain in the Portuguese navy and who had died leaving a daughter to whom Columbus was married. He lived for some time at the home of the widow, and availed himself of the papers and charts which had been gathered by the late governor. His son Diego was born on this island in 1474.

It was about this time that he had some correspondence with an Italian, Toscanelli, an eminent scientific student, in regard to the possibilities of finding land to the westward. With reference to this, Justin Winsor says:

"Meanwhile gathering what hope he could by reading the ancients, by conferring with wise men, and by questioning mariners returning from voyages which had borne them more or less westerly on the great ocean, Columbus suffered the thought to germinate in his mind as it would for several years. Even on the voyages that he made hither and thither for gain, once far north to Iceland, even, or perhaps only to the Faroe Islands, as is inferred, and in active participation in various marauding and warlike expeditions, like the attack on the Venetian galleys near Cape St. Vincent, in 1485, he constantly came in contact with those who could give him hints affecting his theory. Through all these years, however, we know not certainly what were the vicissitudes that fell to his lot."

At this period, about 1470, the cause that landed Columbus in Portugal is ascribed by some writers to an event that is undoubtedly apocryphal. It is said that there was a Columbo the Younger, a Genoese corsair, in whose expe-

ditions Columbus sometimes shared. On the occasion that he found himself in Portugal, he was acting as captain of one of the ships of the squadron of Columbo the Younger.

The latter attacked four Venetian galleys, laden with rich stuffs, which were on their return voyage. The attack was made off the coast of Portugal not far from Lisbon. A battle which lasted all day, ensued, and was fought with desperation, and bloody results.

The accounts of the contest say that the ship commanded by Columbus was engaged with one of the largest of the Venetian galleys and that they fastened together with grappling irons, and both were enveloped in flames. The crews jumped into the sea. Columbus, supported by an oar, swam to the shore a distance of two leagues, and soon after made his way to Lisbon.

This adventure is narrated by his son Fernando, and for a long time, up to within the last century, was accepted as a reliable narration. Later authorities, however, deny its authenticity and assert that while it may be that Columbus took part in the naval battle, he was living in Lisbon, where he had been for some time.

Portugal, at this period, led all the other

nations of Europe in maritime explorations, and on this account, adventurers from all quarters flocked to the Portuguese capital. It is probable that the reputation of the ambition and activity of the Portuguese for exploration attracted the attention of Columbus, and brought him to the great center of maritime operations.

He had accepted the theory of the globular form of the earth, and believed that by sailing westward on the Atlantic, he would find not a new world, but the opposite shores of India. He had read the marvelous accounts of Mandeville and Marco Polo, and fully believed the statements in regard to Cathay, and the Island of Cipango, whose richness excelled description, and the enormous wealth of the Indies.

It was to reach this island, to discover a short route to the thither shore of India that became the dominant idea of Columbus. The conception of a continent, one unknown, between Europe and India, never once entered his mind.

Whether or not Columbus presented his plans, for discovering a shorter route, first to the king of Portugal, or to Genoa and Venice, is not certainly known. It may be that he approached his native city immediately

after leaving Portugal, which would permit the inference that he had failed to make an impression on the Portuguese king. In any case, neither the Genoese nor the Venetians would listen to his schemes.

CHAPTER V

THE REASONS WHICH PROMPTED COLUMBUS

The son of Columbus furnishes the data, or supposed data, on which the navigator founded his plan of discovery.

There were three principal considerations. The first was the conviction that the earth was a globe which might be traveled around without insuperable difficulty. The second was the opinion of eminent writers that the ocean west of Europe must be limited in its extent.

Under the third head are grouped evidences of a country in the west from which have drifted many objects, impelled by the winds. Fernando relates that he found among his father's notes various incidents of this kind. For instance, a Portuguese pilot, after sailing four hundred and fifty leagues to the west, found, in the water, a piece of carved wood which, carried by a west wind, must have

come from some land in that direction. Other notes record that the King of Portugal had learned of reeds of large dimensions which had floated from the west, and which Columbus believed to be of the kind spoken of by an ancient writer as growing in India.

It is probable that among other influences, the letter of Dr. Paul Toscanelli, a Florentine, was not the least influential in confirming his belief that India would be reached by sailing to the west. It was in 1474, that this famous letter was penned; and in it the learned astronomer asserted his belief that not more than fifty-two degrees of longitude separated Asia from western Europe, which was far less than the estimate made by Columbus.

This letter was not written to Columbus, but to a dignitary named Martinez, in Lisbon, and was accompanied by a map which, says Winsor, "was professedly based on information derived from the book of Marco Polo." At the request of Columbus, Toscanelli sent a copy of the letter accompanied by a map, giving his view of the location of India west from Europe.

These are some of the legitimate influences that operated to turn the attention of the Genoese sailor to the possibilities of reaching Asia by sailing west on the Atlantic. There

are other reasons assigned for his apparent certainty as to what was to be found in such a voyage. It is claimed by some authorities that he had an actual knowledge of a land in the west which he obtained from the information of one who had seen it.

A narration prevailed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the effect that a Spanish pilot on a voyage from Madeira, had been driven west till he had encountered land, which it is claimed was Hispaniola, which Columbus afterward discovered. On his return he was shipwrecked, and found a home with Columbus. It is said that he remained in this shelter till he died, leaving his notes and secret with his host. This account has been scouted by some, and believed by others.

A Spanish author, La Vega, claims to have received the story from his father who had visited the Spanish Court during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella. The death of the Spanish pilot occurred in 1484, in time to have permitted Columbus to use the information providing there were any of the kind.

Columbus made a voyage to Iceland in 1477, and it is thought by some that he may have seen the Sagas of the voyages of Northmen to the American coast. There are many claim-

ants to having visited various portions of the western continent. One was Cortereal a Portuguese who, it is affirmed, landed at the banks of Newfoundland, in 1463-1464. John Szkolny, a Polish navigator in the service of Denmark is alleged to have landed at Labrador, in 1476; Cousin, a Frenchman is accredited with having, while on his way to Africa, in 1488-1489, been driven by a storm on the coast of South America.

The application of the astrolabe to navigation—the discovery of two Portuguese, Jewish physicians—came opportunely to aid Columbus. Hitherto ships had always sailed within sight of the land. The astrolabe permitted the sailor to ascertain the height of the sun above the horizon and thus learn his distance from the equator. It has been modified until it is now the modern quadrant. The discovery gave a vast impetus to navigation as it, in connection with the compass, enabled ships to cut loose from the slavery of sailing by points of land, and to venture out into unknown waters.

It is worthy of note that but little furnished by the historians and biographers of Columbus anterior to his first voyage in search of India are in agreement as to many dates, the nature

of actions, or even, in many instances, to the actors themselves. For instance, it is denied by later authorities that Columbus ever applied to the Genoese to undertake to supply him with means to make his initial voyage of discovery. Doubt is thrown on the long entertained belief that the wife of Columbus was Philippa, the daughter of Bartholomew Perestrello; it being claimed that his wife was the daughter of one Vasco Gil Moniz, while it was the sister of the father, Moniz, who married Perestrello.

The statement that he attended the University of Pavia is also discredited. The hitherto accepted assertion that Columbus left Portugal because the tie which bound him to that country was broken by the death of his wife, is pronounced unfounded.

In truth this obscurity, this uncertainty accompanies the great navigator from his cradle to his grave. Probably less is known with exactness, and more is written of an uncertain character about Columbus than of any other great figure within historic times.

CHAPTER VI

THE REAL COLUMBUS MAKES HIS APPEARANCE

It is now 1484, and Columbus, for the first time emerges from his obscurity, and appears as a distinct figure before the world. At this period, perhaps the readers would be glad to have a portrait of the great navigator as drawn by his son and other writers of that time.

He was tall, well-formed, muscular, and of a dignified bearing. His face was long; his complexion fair and freckled and inclined to ruddy; his nose aquiline his cheeks were high, his eyes light gray; his whole countenance had an air of authority. His hair when he was younger was of a light color; but care and trouble, according to Las Casas, soon turned it gray, and at thirty it was quite white. He was moderate and simple in diet and apparel, eloquent in discourse, engaging and affable with strangers, and his amiableness and suavity in domestic life strongly attached his household to his person.

"His temper was naturally irritable; but he subdued it by the magnanimity of his spirit, comporting himself with a courteous and gentle gravity, and never indulging in any intemperance of language. Throughout his life he was noted for the strict attention to the offices of religion, observing rigorously the fast and ceremonies of the church; nor did his piety consist in mere forms, but partook of that lofty and solemn enthusiasm with which his whole character was strongly tinged.

It was this year, 1484, that he was in Lisbon, and presuming on the ambition and activity displayed by the Portuguese in ocean exploration he ventured to lay his plans before King John II., with regard to securing a passage by sea to India. Obtaining an audience with his majesty, he proposed that in case the king would furnish him with ships and men to secure a shorter route than that along the coast of Africa by striking directly west across the Atlantic.

The king, according to Fernando, listened with great attention, but was discouraged from encountering more expenses than had already been incurred in exploring the route by the African coast. Columbus, however, supported his case so well that the king was finally

induced to give his consent. Columbus being possessed by very high ideas exacted so much in the way of titles and other compensations that the king in reality was not disposed to concede his demands.

Barros, the historian, gives a different account of the first interview. He attributes the seeming acquiescence of the king merely to the importunities of Columbus. He considered him "a vain-glorious man, fond of displaying his abilities, and given to fantastic fancies."

John II. referred the matter to a junta which had charge of all affairs relating to maritime matters. This junta was composed of two cosmographers, Roderigo and Joseph, and the king's confessor, Diego Ortiz de Cazadilla, bishop of Ceuta. This scientific body treated the project as extravagant and visionary.

It was suggested to the king by the bishop, that Columbus might be asked for time to examine the matter, while a vessel might be quietly dispatched in the direction he pointed out and learn whether there was any foundation for his theory. Columbus was asked to give the council a plan of the voyage with all the charts and documents in his possession. Then a caravel was dispatched on the pretense of

bearing provisions, but with secret instructions to follow the designated route.

The caravel sailed westward for several days and seeing nothing but an immeasurable ocean, and the weather becoming stormy, put back, ridiculing the project as irrational.

This account is given in the history of Herrera and is in some respects disputed.

Columbus learned of this rascally attempt, and thereupon indignantly declined all offers of King John to renew the negotiations, and, taking his boy Diego, left Portugal and, according to Winsor, disappeared for nearly a year. Munoz claims for this period that he went to Italy. Sharon Turner has conjectured that he went to England; but there seems to be no ground to believe that he had any relations with the English Court except by deputy, for his brother Bartholomew was dispatched to lay his scheme before Henry VII. Whatever may have been the result of this application, no answer seems to have reached Columbus until he was committed to the service of Spain.

A foot-note to this statement says that "there is great uncertainty about this English venture. Benzoni says Columbus' ideas were ridiculed; Bacon (*Life of Henry VII.*) says

that the acceptance of them was delayed by accident; Purchas says that they were accepted too late. F. Cradock regrets the loss of honor which Henry VII. incurred in not listening to the project. There is much confusion of statement in the early writers."

The initial effort of Columbus is thus seen to be a humiliating failure; one which was all the more galling to a high-spirited, sensitive man in that it was accompanied by gross and scandalous treachery on the part of King John, and apparent indifference on the part of Henry of England. In the cases of both these monarchs and their subjects, there came a time when there were ample grounds for chagrin and regret over their ill-advised action.

It is true that many years later, they were both vastly benefitted by the discoveries of Columbus, but neither secured the incomparable honor of being connected with the initial effort which led to the magnificent finding of a new world. Both of these powers reaped, in time, where Columbus had sown. Unwittingly they allowed the chestnuts to be pulled from the fire by another hand, and yet secured a large share of the kernel.

The moral of this transaction does not prove that meanness, as a rule, pays; but it affords

a striking instance in which such qualities do not result in the prompt punishment of their possessors.

One cannot resist speculation as to what would have occurred had Henry VII. listened favorably to the application of Columbus. In such a case, the world would probably have been spared the indescribable bigotry, the immeasurable horrors, the wholesale butchery, the robberies, and all the other wicked atrocities, the cruelties, the devouring greed attending the Spanish discovery.

CHAPTER VII

COLUMBUS WANDERS INTO SPAIN

It was one or two years after leaving Portugal that Columbus appeared in Spain. He arrived there in 1485, according to one authority, and a year later according to another.

It was not an opportune period for the prosecution of his mission. Ferdinand and Isabella were engaged in an attempt to conquer the Moorish Province of Granada, and were meeting with a most determined resistance. It was, however, at the period when Aragon and Castile, the kingdoms respectively of Ferdinand and Isabella, had been united by the marriage of this couple, with the result that Spain was at the very height of its power. Everything was favorable to Columbus: The wealth, and strength of the kingdoms, the intelligence of the reigning monarchs; but a worse time to present his novel plan could not have possibly fallen to his lot.

According to Voltaire, "Ferdinand and Isabella lived together not like man and wife, but like two monarchs strictly allied. They had separate claims to sovereignty, in virtue of their respective kingdoms; they had separate councils, and were often distant from each other in different parts of their empire, each exercising the royal authority."

Ferdinand is described by contemporary writers of middle height well-proportioned, with a commanding carriage. He was slightly bald on the forehead; his hair and beard were a bright brown; his complexion dark, tanned by exposure in the field; his mouth well-formed and gracious in its expression; his teeth small, white, and uneven; his voice sharp; his speech rapid and fluent.

He had excellent judgment, was a fine soldier, a capable statesman, and a fierce, intolerant bigot, largely controlled by the priests. Voltaire says of him: "He was called the wise and prudent in Spain; in Italy the pious; and in England and France, the ambitious and perfidious."

Irving assiduously collected the contemporary utterances of the Spanish historians with reference to Isabella with highly laudatory results. According to the views of the gallant

Spanish writers she is one of the purest and most beautiful characters in history, and as charming in body as in soul. She was of medium size, graceful in figure and deportment, and possessed of a mingled gravity and sweetness of demeanor. Her complexion was fair; her hair auburn inclined to red—the favorite tint four centuries later—her eyes were a clear blue with a benign expression, and there was a singular modesty in her countenance, gracing, as it did, a wonderful firmness of purpose, and earnestness of spirit.

In all essential respects she was a model save that, like her husband, she was a bigot, and under the thumb of the priests. She was hand in hand with the infernal Torquemada by whose side Caligula, and other human monsters were pure, white-robed angels. Morally this beautiful woman was a participating accessory in the most atrocious series of crimes known in history.

Prescott denounces this infamous institution, the Spanish Inquisition, in language unstinted in its vigor.

"It was not enough now," he says, "as formerly, to conform passively to the doctrines of the church, but it was enjoined to make war on all who refused them. * * * The most

frightful maxims were deliberately engrafted into the code of morals. There was some doubt whether a man might slay his own father, if a heretic or an infidel, but none whatever as to his right, in that event to take away the life of his son or brother. Anyone, it was said, might conscientiously kill an apostate whenever he could meet him. These maxims were not a dead letter, but of most active operation, as the sad records of the dread tribunal too well prove."

Such was the character of an institution which was introduced into Spain by Isabella, who, in all other respects was a paragon of the virtues; whose other phases of action were characterized by tenderness and mercy which were boundless in their extent and application.

Ferdinand was equally a partner in this infamous crime. He was the more culpable, if possible, of the two, for the reason that he could, if he would, have prevented the blood from reddening the soil of Spain.

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the blood spilled and the cruelties perpetrated by the agency of Torquemada, together with the massacre, robbery, spoilation, and other crying outrages inflicted by the Spaniards in the early invasion of this continent, fairly outweighs in

the scale of justice the benefits the world has received from the actions of Ferdinand and Isabella. It is due to the same illustrious couple, under pressure from Torquemada, that several hundred thousand Jews were driven out of Spain under circumstances so utterly atrocious and abhorrent that humanity, after an interval of four hundred years, still sheds its tears over the woeful recollection.

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CHAPTER VIII

FIRST EFFORTS OF COLUMBUS IN SPAIN

There are several accounts concerning the arrival of Columbus in Spain, and the persons with whom he was first put into communication. One account has it that he sought at first to make influence among wealthy Spanish noblemen. Among these were the dukes of Medina Sidonia and Medina Celi, who were enormously wealthy, with shipping and all other appliances appertaining to princes.

This account goes on to state that Columbus saw frequently the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who was very much impressed by the magnificence of the statements of Columbus, but in the end rejected the projects of Columbus as being the extravagant vision of a dreamer; the Duke of Medina Celi heard Columbus with favor at the beginning. He was so struck with the idea advanced by the navigator that he offered him the use of three or four caravels which were all ready for sea in his harbor at

Port St. Mary, when it suddenly occurred to him that the enterprise if successful, would include discoveries too important to be handled by anybody less than a monarch. He finally abandoned the idea, however.

Columbus then determined to go to France, which being learned by the duke, who was unwilling that Spain should lose an opportunity so promising, he wrote to Queen Isabella, recommending it to her attention. She replied, asking that Columbus might be sent to her. The Spanish Court was then at Cordova, to which Columbus went with a letter to the queen from the duke, and asking in case the enterprise should be undertaken he should have an interest in it, and permission to fit out the armament from his port as a compensation for having given up the expedition in favor of the crown. This is one account.

Another account says that Columbus was unfortunate in his first channel of communication with the Court. He was furnished by Fray Juan Perez de Marchini in charge of the Convent of La Ravida in Andalusia, who has taken a deep interest in the plans of the navigator, with an introduction to Fernando de Talavera, prior of Prado, and the confessor of the queen, a person who stood very high in

the royal estimate, and had been raised to the archiepiscopal see of Granada. He was a man of great learning, and, it was said by Prescott: "his learning was that of a cloister, deeply tinctured with pedantry and superstition, and debased by such servile deference even to the errors of antiquity as at once led him to discountenance everything like innovation or enterprise."

Talavera was not in the least able to comprehend the schemes of Columbus, and looked upon him as a person with an unsettled mind, and not altogether orthodox. The king and queen ordered Talavera to select a council of the most eminent scholars of the kingdom, chiefly churchmen. The theories of Columbus were discussed by the conclave with lethargic interest, and so numerous were the prejudices, and so great the skepticism, that they were several years in coming to a decision.

During this period of waiting, Columbus was in attendance at the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella, fighting occasionally against the Moors, and being treated by the sovereigns with great attention. He was supported by money furnished by the royal order, for his private expenses, and according to Herrera, the Spanish historian, the municipalities of

Andelusia were instructed to supply him gratuitously with lodging and other personal accommodation.

At length Columbus, worn out by the long delay, asked the Court for a definite answer to his propositions, when he was informed that the Council of Salamanca pronounced his scheme to be "vain, impracticable, and resting on grounds too weak to merit the support of the government." There were a few in the council who differed from this report, who believed in his scheme, and gave him their friendship. One of these was the Cardinal Mendoza, and another, Deza, archbishop of Seville, who was afterward the successor to Torquemada, the chief of the infernal Spanish Inquisition.

The influence of these two men with the sovereigns was so great that they gave an assurance to Columbus that, "although they were too much occupied at present to embark in his undertaking, yet at the conclusion of the war they would find both time and inclination to treat with him."

Columbus received this communication as a refusal, and at once left the Court with the intention of seeking some other patron to his undertaking. Without wasting further time

he started to France, in 1491, to lay his proposal before the king who had written him a letter of encouragement.

The third account is the well-known one and the most generally accepted which relates to his presentation of himself at the Convent of Santa Maria de la Ravida, asking for bread for himself and his boy. The convent was near Palos and was in charge of Father Superior Juan Perez de Marchina. The stranger interested the prior and it was by his advice that Columbus was sent to Cordova with such claims to recognition as the prior of Ravida could give him.

It was in 1485 or 1486 that Columbus laid his proposal before Ferdinand and Isabella. Among those attached to the Court was Alexander Geraldinus, a traveler, a man of letters, and a mathematician, who assisted Columbus in pressing his views upon their majesties. It was through his influence that the ear of Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza was obtained. The king under the archbishop's advice, called the council of learned men at Salamanca, spoken of in the second theory.

"Here," says a writer, "he was met by all that prejudice, contempt, and ignorance (as now understood, but wisdom then), could bring

to bear in the shape of scriptural contradictions of his views, and the pseudo-scientific distrust of what were thought mere visionary aims. He told them that he should find Asia that way, and that if he did not there must be other land westerly, quite as desirable to discover. No conclusion had been reached when, in the spring of 1487, the Court departed from Cordova, and Columbus found himself left behind without encouragement, save in the support of a few whom he had convinced."

For five long years Columbus danced attendance on their majesties, fought with them against the Moors to gain their good will, and finally, in 1491, he left the monarchs and returned to Rávida. Once more he convinced the prior, who again applied to the queen with the result that she recalled him. He was very cordially received, and for the first time hope of success possessed his soul.

However, his satisfaction was short-lived. When the discussion of terms, of rewards, of honors occurred, Columbus developed what seemed to their majesties to be a greed of most extraordinary dimensions. When he demanded that he should be made viceroy, and that he should receive one-tenth of the income, their majesties refused to listen any further, and the

conference was summarily brought to a termination.

Columbus mounted his mule and once more started for France.

CHAPTER IX

COLUMBUS AGAIN RECALLED TO COURT—QUEEN ISABELLA

Two wise men, Santangel of Aragon, and Quintanilla of Castile respectively finance ministers of the two kingdoms in the order named, saw, as they thought, something of value in the projects of Columbus. They appealed to Isabella to reconsider her determination, and to give instructions to recall the navigator. Once more Columbus stood in the presence of her majesty.

It seems somewhat inconsistent with the reputed firmness, excellent judgment, and practical sense of Ferdinand and Isabella that they should have been five years in making up their minds, and that, throughout all that period, they should have exhibited so constant vacillation.

It was April 17th, 1492, when Columbus again faced the imperial couple, and received a written agreement to the effect that he should

have the positions of high-admiral, and viceroy in new territories to be discovered, and one eighth of the profits in consideration that he should bear one-eighth of the expenses of the expedition.

It is at this interview where the first allusion is made to the eagerness of Isabella to further the enterprise by the proffer of her jewels.

"I will," she said, "assume the undertaking for my own crown of Castile, and am ready to pawn my jewels to defray the expenses, if the funds in the treasury shall be found to be inadequate."

Under the more powerful lens of modern investigation, much of the past which is obscure, distorted, exaggerated, has been clearly revealed in its true character. The results of these minute and careful inspections are often instructive, iconoclastic; they resolve legends, romances, traditions, alleged history and prove their real character.

William Tell, under this modern microscope, becomes a myth; men and events accepted verities for generations, are materially modified and sometimes disappear. The character and dimensions of the giants of antiquity are reconstructed, as are the frames of extinct animals by a bone in the possession of the comparative anatomist.

In this inspection of the past few notabilities have escaped examination, and among those who have been most thoroughly analyzed is Queen Isabella. The result leaves us a gracious queen, a woman conspicuous for her beauty and mental charms; a grand figure in the pantheon of the fifteenth century, with the sagacity, the foresight, the skill of a statesman; the instincts of a chivalrous knight; in her skirts a feminine counterpart of the Cid in his armor. All these qualities remain under the inspection of the critical lenses, and much more. We still see the young girl daring death to keep her plighted faith with her lover; there remains the loving wife who never forgot her obligation to her husband; who was a tender mother, a woman of profound piety, and whose moral life was without a flaw.

It is the same Isabella and yet not the same Isabella, which is reconstructed by the scientific anatomist. The main points which the world has so long recognized are there to a considerable extent, but some of the accepted ones are absent. The modern presentation of this great woman does not in the least detract from her resplendent genius, and her superiority to all the other great women of the century in which she lived; it simply changes her

attitude in a very material point, toward the discovery of this continent.

An encyclopedist says of Isabella :—

"The masculine intellect, the feminine charms, and the rare virtues of Isabella have been a favorite theme for historians of all subsequent times, and the affection in which her subjects held her person is still cherished throughout Spain for her memory.

"For Ferdinand she always entertained the warmest affection, which was not always faithfully returned. A genuine piety colored every action of her life. In person she was equally beautiful as in character. She had a clear complexion, light blue eyes, and auburn hair. She had five children. * * * The encouragement of Christopher Columbus is the deed by which she is best known to posterity; the squadron with which he discovered America was equipped at her expense."

All this is true save the closing assertion. Isabella did encourage Columbus, but she did not pay the expenses of the squadron with which he discovered this country.

The beautiful belief that she gave him her jewels to raise needed funds to equip the fleet of discovery, is, I regret to say, no longer regarded by the latest authorities as a fact. It

is a pity that the cold iconoclast of the nineteenth century should destroy one of the most charming of the delusions of the fifteenth.

In the "Narrative and Critical History of America" by Justin Winsor, the well-known librarian of Harvard University, and which consists of four thousand pages in eight volumes, is treated exhaustively every phase of this continent from earliest antiquity down to the latter portion of the present century.

The portion of this volume devoted to "Columbus and His Discoveries" is based on manuscript beginning with documentary proofs first collected by a Spanish historian, Herrera, in 1601, and thence through all subsequent accumulations furnished by successive Spanish writers. Many new manuscripts were consulted—that is, new in the sense of never before having been examined or given publicity.

It is from this source that will be given the authorities to prove that Isabella did not assist Columbus with either cash or her jewels, as is popularly supposed. She gave him moral support; she rewarded him with honors after he had found the western islands—the Bahamas, the Antilles, and the misnamed West Indies, which some years later led to the discovery of the mainland by the Cabots

and Vespucci within a few weeks of each other.

In Vol. II. of the "Narrative and Critical History of America," the legend in regard to the donation of her jewels by the queen to Columbus is thus alluded to by Winsor:—

"The world has long glorified the story in the 'Historie of 1571' about the part which the crown jewels and the like played in the efforts of Isabella to assist Columbus in the furnishing of Columbus' vessel. Peter Martyr, Bernaldes and others who took occasion to make frequent mention, to sound the praises of her majesty, say nothing of it; and as is now contended, for the good reason that there was no truth in the story, the jewels having long before been pledged in the prosecution of the war with the Moors."

Washington Irving speaks of the interview between Santangel and Isabella as follows:—

"With an enthusiasm worthy of herself and of her cause Isabella exclaimed: 'I undertake the enterprise for my own crown of Castile, and will pledge my jewels to raise the necessary funds.'"

"This was the proudest moment in the life of Isabella. Santangel, eager to secure this noble impulse assured her that there would be no need of her pledging her jewels, as he was

ready to advance the necessary funds. His offer was gladly accepted; the funds really came from the coffers of Aragon."

These facts leave no doubt on the question of the jewels and also as to the part Ferdinand and Isabella took in aiding Columbus on his first voyage of discovery. They smiled on him, and Santangel and the Pinzons furnished the cash and the ships.

The brightest feature in the acts of Isabella was her sympathy with the suffering inflicted on the natives of the new world. A cargo of them was taken over to Spain to be used as slaves, but were returned by order of the queen, and a penalty of death of the culprits in case they refused to obey.

Isabella was a strange compound in this matter of tenderness and sensibility to the abuse of Amercian Indians and the Moors against whom she fought, but whom she would not permit to be persecuted. And yet, thus sensitive to pain, she was the sovereign who consented to the introduction of the Inquisition with all its imaginable horrors.

Eminently just in her judgment, enforcing justice without the slightest reference to the wealth or social standing of culprits, she was capable of committing acts which in this age

of enlightenment are looked upon as gross outrages. In Vol. IX, p. 422 of the American Encyclopedia, it is said of the queen:—

"Though the life and soul of the war against the Moors, in which she personally took part, even wearing armor, she was opposed to the cruelty which was then the established policy toward that people; and if she decreed the expulsion of the Jews from Castile, and gave a reluctant consent to the introduction of the Inquisition, it was from a conviction that the safety of the Catholic faith demanded this sacrifice of her private feelings."

"This sacrifice of her private feelings sent 160,000 Jews into exile, who were soon after followed by 3,000,000 Moors who were given the choice between becoming Christians or being expatriated."

In view of these facts in regard to Isabella, it is not just that she should be presented to the American people as the patron whose money and influence brought about the discovery of the Western Continent. Shall we perpetuate a legend which is demonstrated to be an untruth solely for the purpose of giving a woman prominence?

The civilization of the northern half of the hemisphere is not in the least due to the Span-

ish queen, but rather to an English queen, Elizabeth. The northern half was discovered by Englishmen, the Cabots; it was first settled by Englishmen, mainly under the lead of Sir Walter Raleigh, and the patronage of Queen Elizabeth, who planted colonies on this portion of the continent in an area which was named Virginia.

The colonization of the northern half of the Western Hemisphere was not the greedy and bloody effort of robbers; it was of a pacific people that sought homes, established schools, tilled the land, and cultivated the growth of civilization. The moral and physical advantages which North America enjoyed over the conditions of South America, are largely due to the initial encouragement afforded by "the Virgin Queen" in the seventeenth century of explorers and colonists.

Great as was Elizabeth; great as was the age in which she lived, and potent as was the assistance she rendered toward the peaceful settlement of this northern continent, she is an objectionable character. While one of the greatest spirits in many essential qualities, of her age, or any other, she was nevertheless a very bad woman. She was a notorious liar, her hands were reddened with the blood of her

own sisters and that of many others ; a virgin, she was unchaste ; she was a bigot, she persecuted Puritans and Catholics, was a trickster and treacherous.

Leaving out all moral considerations, and looking only at the benefits which this hemisphere has derived from the subjects of Elizabeth and Isabella, the balance is largely in favor of the former ; but neither is entitled to stand for the statue of a woman who represents prominence in the discovery of America.

CHAPTER X

PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE

Columbus did not omit the pious argument in his presentation of his plans to the monarchs. While their avarice for an extension of territorial domains and for gold was not lost sight of, their religious natures were freely stimulated.

His mission, he claimed, was as much to secure the salvation of the heathen as for any other purpose. He was undertaking the voyage for the reason that he wished to fulfill certain prophecies in the sacred scriptures which clearly foretold the discovery of a new land. As if these reasons were not sufficient to awaken the religious element, he promised to devote a large amount of the profits of the voyage to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.

Columbus must be credited with a most extraordinary pertinacity which would have entitled him to a hero's laurels had he even

failed in his voyage of discovery. He had labored for eighteen years to bring about the end which he sought for.

His perseverance was the more remarkable in view of the character of public sentiment, which was hostile, or indifferent; the priesthood, with a half dozen exceptions, was antagonistic; the entire church believed that it was a contravention of the scriptures, and the teaching of the fathers to admit that the world was spherical, and could be encompassed by sailing in one direction.

The ocean which extended to the western sky was an unknown expanse of howling hurricanes, mysterious dangers, and a region peopled undoubtedly by ravenous monsters, and demons of accursed birth. Columbus did not credit these beliefs, born of superstition and ignorance; but the existence of such ideas was a powerful obstacle whose full force he encountered at a critical time when it came very near to ruining his prospects.

Columbus met a fierce opposition at the very outset of his voyage at Palos, the port of departure.

This port, for some offense against the government, had been ordered to furnish the crown, for one year, with two armed vessels.

Columbus was given an order for the use of these two, and also the necessary papers authorizing him to enforce compliance with his wishes.

The leading men of the town were summoned to meet Columbus at St. George's church, where the official order of the crown was read to place the two caravels and their crews at the service of Columbus, a third ship to be provided by the latter. The order announced that the crews were to implicitly obey the orders of Columbus in all things except any which might direct them to go to the coast of Africa, or any portion of land or sea in the possession of Portugal.

The order further directed the people of Andalusia, in the maritime borders, to furnish supplies for the vessels at reasonable figures. To encourage enlistments, any person who should volunteer and against whom there was pending a criminal prosecution, such process should be suspended during their absence, and for an additional period of two months after their return from the voyage.

Of course, this was a bid for the criminal element. It was probably thought that the larger the number of this class the better for the community, while they were quite good enough

for the purposes of such a voyage as was contemplated. Later developments amply demonstrated the disadvantage of this criminal element.

The authorities readily agreed to respond to all these demands until the nature of the expedition came to be known. Then a panic pervaded the community. The ships' crews were looked upon as being required for a service so desperate that it amounted to the sacrifice of their fortunes and their lives. The owners of the vessels absolutely refused to supply them. The seamen rebelled and shrank from this cruise into the unknown.

Many weeks elapsed, and no vessel was procured or anything else asked for in the orders of the crown. Additional orders were issued by their majesties directing the officials of Andalusia to press into service any vessels of Spanish ownership, and to oblige the captains and crews to sail with Columbus wherever he wished to go. A special officer of the royal household was sent to see that the order was carried out, but he met with no success.

There was a tremendous confusion among the various communities. Riots occurred and extended rebellion seemed likely to take place.

At this critical moment relief came from an

unexpected quarter. There were two navigators, owners of vessels, the brothers Pinzon, Martin Alonzo, and Vicente Yanez, who stepped forward and offered to furnish two of the vessels required. The "Pinta" was one of the ships that had been previously pressed into the service, and all sorts of obstacles were made by the owners to defeat the voyage. Many of the seamen who had enlisted willingly, deserted.

The example of the Pinzons had all the effect to allay this opposition, and to induce many of their friends to take part in the expedition. The fleet as made up consisted of the "Santa Maria" which was the only one of the three that had a deck, while the others, the "Nina" and the "Pinta" were open caravels. Martin Alonzo commanded the "Pinta" and Vicente the "Nina." Columbus raised his flag on the "Santa Maria."

As can be learned from this statement, Ferdinand and Isabella had little to do with the expedition save to issue the orders for the outfit; two of the vessels being furnished by outsiders, while the smallest and poorest one only was due to the crown of Spain.

Escobar went along as a royal notary to take notice of all transactions. There were physi-

cians, priests to the number of a dozen or so, ninety sailors, making in all one hundred and twenty people.

They sailed out of the harbor of Palos on the 3d of August 1492. The feeling in the community was gloomy and despondent for there were many of the friends and relatives of the Andalusian population who had embarked on the voyage. This depression on the part of the people had a sinister effect upon the sailors, and filled them with dismal previsions of disaster, and a fear that they would never return.

Just before the anchors were weighed, Columbus confessed himself to the prior, Juan Perez, and partook of the sacrament of the communion. His example was followed by his officers and crew, and they entered on their enterprise with devout and affecting ceremonials, committing themselves to the care and guidance, and the special protection of Heaven.

According to Brevoort, in his "Verrazano," after describing the usual route of the early navigators from Spain to the West Indies, Columbus kept two records of his progress. One was an unworthily deceitful one (reminding us of an earlier deceit when he tampered with a compass to mislead his crew), by which he hoped to check the apprehensions of his

men, arising from his increasing longitude ; and the other a dead reckoning of some kind, in which he thought he was approximately accurate. The story of his capitulating to his crew, and agreeing to turn back in three days in case land was not reached, is only told by Oviedo on the testimony of a pilot hostile to Columbus,

CHAPTER XI

INTO THE SEA OF DARKNESS

It requires no stretch of fancy to see, as one looks back four centuries, that the occupants of the little trinity of vessels leaving the Spanish port were more like a collection of mourners, or like condemned victims on their way to the scaffold. Of course, this despondency was not shared by Columbus. He, on the contrary, must have felt buoyant, happy, and inspired by the brightest of hopes.

The change in his condition was miraculous. For nearly a score of years, he had been a wanderer, looked on as an idle vagabond by some, a semi-crazed visionary by others, and an object of contempt and derision of the majority with whom he came in contact.

It must have been a balm to his hurts, as he stood on the deck of the "Santa Maria," with the prow of his fleet pointing directly into the mysterious West.

He was no longer humble, neglected, subject to the insults of the world ; he was now an admiral, a viceroy, with dignities and power but little below those of the monarchs whom he served. It is not, however, probable that he gave much more than a brief retrospective glance over his experiences of his long and weary journey from pauperhood to princship ; he rather looked ahead into the future.

What he saw can easily be imagined. It was a roseate view. India, with its perfumes and spices, its pearls and precious diamonds, its shining gold-dust, its brilliant dyes. He carried a letter to the mighty Khan of India, and his mind dwelt with pride on the reception which would be given him, and the honors conferred on him in the white marble palace of the Indian potentate. He strolled in imagination through the magnificent streets of the new found city of Cipango.

It is even possible that it may have come within his vision that he should find the domain of the famous Prester John, the mysterious king, who was white, whose banner bore the cross, and who ruled a kingdom of Christian subjects. What a welcome he would receive from this Prester John, who was believed to be immortal, as his existence had been spoken of for more

than four centuries, by travelers who had visited India, who always heard of this monarch but never could just reach the region in which he reigned.

And thus thinking, dreaming, hoping, elated, with his nerves thrilling with expectation, and his blood racing through his veins, Columbus sailed westward and plunged boldly into the depths of the Unknown.

The weather was fair and the initiation of the voyage was filled with happy portents from smooth waves and smiling skies. At no period during his voyage did the elements afford opposition to his progress; on the contrary, it seemed sentient, to know his purpose, and aided him with quiet waves and favoring gales.

It was not in his surroundings that dangers lurked, but in the human forces that accompanied him. Storms arose, destruction menaced the expedition, but it was all within, not without the vessels.

The first interruption came from the failure of the rudder of the "Pinta." As this was the ship whose services were forcibly taken by the crown, Columbus had reason to suspect that the damage had been arranged in advance by the dissatisfied owners.

The fleet ran into a harbor in the Canaries, where a new rudder was made and, after a delay of several weeks, the voyage was resumed. When they lost sight of the Canaries, they were beyond the limit of known navigation, and the crew began to rapidly lose heart. They had left the known world behind them. They were going they knew not whither. They wept, and showed their grief and despair in clamorous complainings. The sight of a mast floating by them, and which seemed to have been a long time in the water, gave them an additional shock. It was suggestive of what would happen to them in the frightful darkness beyond. Columbus tried to reassure them. He held out to them visions of unlimited wealth, and appealed to their cupidity, their passions, and every other motive which would reconcile them to their journey. As stated, he concealed with a false record the number of leagues passed over each day.

Thirty days after leaving Palos, the voyagers were cheered by the sight of a heron, and a wag-tail, birds which are not believed to venture very far from land. In due season, the fleet fell within the influence of the trade winds and sailed on in a delicious atmosphere and over pacific waters. Weeds began to make their

appearance ; a white bird flew about the ship, one of the kind that never sleeps on the sea.

The birds were harbingers of good, and it is largely to their cheering presence and matutinal songs that the crew was kept from open rebellion.

Nevertheless it required the utmost patience, watchfulness, and the exercise of all sorts of ingenious expedients on the part of the admiral to prevent an open outbreak. For a time the crew was delighted with the trade wind which bore them smoothly on ; and then they became alarmed at its long continuance, for then they feared it would always blow from the east, and thus prevent their return to Spain.

When they first met masses of floating weeds, they were gratified because they thought it was an indication of the nearness of land ; and when the weeds became denser, they became frightened thinking they might become imprisoned in the thick vegetation from which they would never be able to extricate themselves. When it was calm they were equally dissatisfied, for then they thought they had reached a region where the air was stagnant, and they might rot in the windless sea.

The task of placating the sailors tested to the extreme the efforts of the admiral. They

talked over their doubts, fears, and discontent, at first, among themselves, and in time these mutterings became louder and reached the ears of the officers. The situation became critical; they began to regard Columbus as a soulless adventurer who was willing to imperil their lives to gratify some useless purpose. It was about decided to throw their commander into the sea, attributing it to accident, and then return to Spain. It was just at a time, when the expedition was on the point of being ruined by mutiny, when there rang out from the "Pinta," the thrilling cry of: "Land! Land!" It was Martin Alonzo Pinzon who shouted the tidings.

Everything was at once turned into joy, but the joy became despair when after sailing all night toward what had been supposed to be land proved to be a deception. Several days followed in which there was an incessant cry of "Land!" from the sailors, but there proved to be no foundation for the alarm.

On the 1st of October the reckoning showed that they had sailed five hundred and eighty leagues from the Canary Islands, while the private reckoning kept by Columbus showed the distance to be seven hundred and seven. For a week the men were discouraged and mutinous, and it is marvelous that they did not seize

the ship, and turn the prow homeward. A little thing diverted their attention from their wretched thoughts and rekindled their smoldering hopes.

Several of the people saw a light, one night on the horizon, Columbus being the first to detect it. At two in the morning of the same night, the roar of a gun from the "Pinta" gave the joyful signal that land was in sight. It was discovered by a sailor named Rodrigo Triana, who claimed the reward offered to the first who should discover land, but it was taken by Columbus who first saw the light.

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW WORLD

It was on the 12th of October that the New World presented itself to the view of the expedition. It was a low island, densely wooded from out the depths of which there poured masses of people who covered the shores, and watched, with boundless astonishment, the white-winged ships, which to them must have seemed monstrous birds swimming over the water.

A landing was made from the small boats, after the ships had dropped their anchors. In order to impress the strangers with the splendor of their appearance, Columbus wore a scarlet wrap, and held aloft the gorgeous banner of Spain, while the brothers Pinzon each in his own boat also carried banners, green in hue, and decorated with golden letters, "F," and "I," for Ferdinand and Isabella. The men were clad in glittering steel, and stuffs of brilliant

colors, so that the procession of boats, with its scarlet, gold, green, and other bright hues must have resembled a floral march.

All of them threw themselves on their knees when they landed to return thanks for the fortunate outcome of their journey. The admiral then drew his sword, and took possession of the island in the name of the Spanish sovereigns, and gave it the name of San Salvador. As is known, the island is one of the group of Bahamas, and a long distance from the America which Columbus has the credit of having discovered.

So soon as the natives saw the approach of the small boats filled with beings with white faces and long beards, they fled in terror to the depths of the woods in which they concealed themselves, terrified at the spectacle which seemed to have risen out of the deep.

The place and the people suggested Eden before the fall. The air was pure and inspiring, the skies soft, blue, and tender; the vegetation was rich in coloring, and of a wonderful beauty, and the trees were loaded with unknown fruits. The natives, without exception, men, women, children, wore no clothing. They were as naked as were Adam and Eve before they ate the forbidden fruit. They were beard-

less, tawny, or copper-colored, with long straight black hair.

The adults were tall, well-formed, with fine foreheads and piercing eyes. Only one woman was among those of them who ventured to approach the Spaniards, and she, like the others, was entirely naked. They were friendly, and seemed to have the gentleness of a race possessed only of the milder qualities of character. Their arms were wooden lances hardened at the ends by fire, and pointed with the bones of fish.

The admiral distributed among them some gaudy presents such as colored glass-beads and hawk's bells with which they were immensely delighted. They supposed from the munificence of the Spaniards that they were gods who had come to them from the sky. Columbus, under the impression that he had reached India spoke of the natives as Indians, a misnomer which extended to the main land, with the result that all the aboriginal inhabitants of both North and South America have since been known as Indians.

Some of the natives had ornaments of gold in their noses, a sight which undoubtedly conferred greater satisfaction among the Spaniards than even the sight of land in their extremity. The

simple natives unaware of the intrinsic value of the metal traded their ornaments for colored glass-beads, and beyond doubt thought the Spaniards to be a very liberal, and credulous people. They informed the visitors, as they best could, when asked where they obtained the material of which their ornaments were made, that it came from the south, where there was a king with great wealth who ate from vessels of gold.

Columbus at once concluded that the region abounding in gold was the noted Cipango, and that the king was the one whose wealth, power, and splendor had been reported by Marco Polo. He sailed in the direction indicated, but found no other island which differed in any particular respect from San Salvador, the one first discovered, and known to the natives as Guanahane. He found, however, everywhere a most delicious climate, nourishing fruit, cool, pure water from shaded springs, and received every attention which could be afforded by the natives.

Still as they found no gold, in any quantities, their disappointment was great. They undoubtedly appreciated the kindness of the Indians, but what they were in search of was gold. Columbus treated the people with the utmost

gentleness, his motive probably being to secure their good will and obtain from them information as to where the mines of precious metals were located. It was always an island farther on, according to his informants, and Columbus sailed on from island to island looking vainly for an *ignis fatuus* which constantly wooed him and as constantly eluded him.

The fourth island which he reached was one of the Bahamas where he expected to find a great monarch and rich gold-mines, but, as usual, found neither. It was a very charming place, however, concerning which an extract from his journal contains the following :—

“Here are large lakes and the groves about them are marvelous; and here and in all the islands everything is green, as in April in Andalusia. The singing of the birds is such that it seems as if one would never desire to depart hence. There are flocks of parrots which obscure the sun, and other birds large and small, of so many kinds so different from ours, that it is wonderful; and besides, there are trees of a thousand species, each having its particular fruit, and all of marvelous flavor, so that I am in the greatest trouble in the world not to know them, for I am certain that they are each of great value. I shall bring home some of

them as specimens, and also some of the herbs."

To this beautiful island he gave the name of the queen, Isabella. He was very anxious to discover the drugs and spices of the east, and on approaching this island, thought he detected in the air the spicy odors said to be wafted from the islands of the Indian seas.

"As I arrived at this cape," says he, "there came thence a fragrance so good and soft from the flowers or the trees of the land that it was the sweetest thing in the world. I believe that there are here many trees and herbs which would be of great price in Spain for tinctures, medicines, and spices; but I know nothing of them, which gives me great concern."

He goes on further to say that the fish which abounded in these seas, partook of the novelty which characterized most of the objects in the New World. They rivaled the birds in tropical brilliancy of color, the scales of some of them glancing back the rays of light like precious stones; and the dolphins, taken out of their element, delighted the eye with the changes of colors ascribed in fable to the chameleon.

CHAPTER XIII

COLUMBUS REACHES CUBA

Columbus left this delicious island called by the natives Saometo, and sailed on the 24th of October at midnight in search of an island called Cuba, which from the signs of the natives he undertsood to be of great extent, producing gold, pearls, and spices and carrying on an extensive commerce in these precious articles, and that large merchant ships came to trade with its inhabitants.

He was now certain that this island must be the famous Cipango, and the merchant ships those of the Grand Khan. He therefore determined to sail at once for this island and make himself acquainted with its forts, cities, and productions for the purpose of establishing relations of traffic.

After having visited Cuba he had it in his program to visit another great island named Bohio, concerning which there were given mar-

velous accounts by the natives. His stay in those islands would depend upon the extent of the precious metals and stones and other valuable articles which he would find there. After this he would sail by the main land of India which must be within ten days journey, and find the city of Quinsai, which according to Marco Polo was one of the most magnificent capitals in the world; he would there deliver in person the letters of the Castilian Government to the Grand Khan, and when he received his reply, return triumphantly to Spain with this document, to prove that he had accomplished the great object of his voyage. Such was the splendid scheme with which Columbus fed his imagination, when about to leave the Bahamas in quest of the island of Cuba.

This program of the admiral is given by the historian Navarrete, and is credited to the journal of Columbus.

Three days after leaving Isabella, he came in sight of Cuba, on the morning of the 28th of October. He was struck as he approached the island by its magnificence, its lofty mountains, its great plains traversed by mighty rivers, its stately forests, its grand promontories and headlands which melted away into the remotest distance. He took possession of the

island and gave it the name of Buena, in honor of Prince Juan, and to the river in which he landed, the name of San Salvador.

In his journal a continual eulogy is made by Columbus on the beauty of the country. "There is a wonderful splendor," he says, "variety and luxuriance in the vegetation of these quick and ardent climates. The verdure of the groves and the colors of the flowers and blossoms, derive a vividness from the transparent purity of the air, and the deep serenity of the azure heavens. The forests, too, are full of life, swarming with birds of brilliant plumage. Painted varieties of parrots and woodpeckers create a glitter in the verdure of groves, and the humming birds dart from flower to flower resembling animated particles of a rainbow. The scarlet flamingoes, too, seen sometimes through the opening of the forest, have the appearance of soldiers drawn up in a battalion, with an advance scout on the alert to give notice of approaching danger. Nor is the least beautiful part of animated nature the various tribes of insects peopling every plant, and displaying brilliant coats of mail which sparkle like precious gems."

Columbus did not doubt that this wonderful island possessed mines of gold and groves of

spices, and that it was certainly the Island of Cipango. He sailed westward to find the magnificent city where its king was situated. He at last discovered, on further examination, that this was not the Island of Cipango, but he concluded that he had reached the mainland of India, and if so he could not be at any great distance from Mangi and Cathay, the ultimate destination of his voyage. He thought that the prince in question who reigned over this neighboring country, must be some Oriental potentate of consequence, and that he would find him and send a present to the monarch with one of the letters from the Castilian sovereign; and after visiting his dominions, he would proceed to the capital of Cathay, the residence of the Grand Khan.

So sure was Columbus that he was on the borders of Cathay that he sent a delegation of two Spaniards and an Indian to find the monarch, and to deliver to him the assurance that he was a friend and the bearer of a letter from the sovereign of Castile to the Grand Khan.

The ambassadors returned after an absence of some weeks. They found no great monarch, no indications of gold, no precious stones, no spices; simply found the capital an Indian collection of huts with about a thousand inhab-

itants, who were the average natives, naked, hospitable, guileless, and simple.

There was one who seemed to have some authority, but there was no princely potentate such as Columbus anticipated finding. He wore no royal robes, but went about in a state of unclad purity, occupying no palace, but living in a plain hut like his subjects.

Navarrete, in his "First Voyage of Columbus," relates an event which will be a novelty to most people who have supposed that to Sir Walter Raleigh is due the discovery of tobacco-smoking. "On their return, the ambassadors witnessed," says Navarrete, "the use of a weed, which the caprice of men has since converted into a universal luxury in defiance of the opposition of the senses. They beheld several natives going along with firebrands in their hands, and certain dried herbs which they rolled up in a leaf, and lighting one end, put the other in their mouths, and continued exhaling and puffing out the smoke. A roll of this kind, they called tobacco, a name since transferred to the plant from which the rolls were made. The Spaniards, although prepared to meet with wonders, were struck with astonishment at this singular and apparently nauseous indulgence."

It thus appears that the use of the cigarette was discovered four hundred years ago, on the very island which has ever since been the chief source of its growth and manufacture. Columbus, in his eager search for gold, precious stones, and spices, overlooked in the tobacco-plant a mine of wealth that has since yielded untold millions of dollars on the very island where he discovered it.

The returned ambassadors gave rose-colored reports of the character of the country. They had encountered many small settlements surrounded by fields in which were growing in luxuriance, sweet pepper, potatoes, Indian-corn; many of the trees bore fruits at once plentiful and nutritious, among which was the yuca, and lupine from which the natives made bread.

This report ended Columbus' dream of finding Cuba the opulent Cipango of the ancient writers. Nevertheless, the hope of finding gold-bearing regions was not yet extinguished. Natives informed him by signs of a place in the east where the people collected gold along the banks of streams, and made it into bars; and concerning which they used the words Babique, and Bohio, which the admiral construed as names of places. Taking aboard several of the

Cubans of both sexes, for the purpose of carrying them to Spain, where they could learn the language, and thereafter act as interpreters, he set out in search of Babique, or Bohio.

Had Columbus not been diverted from his course by this change in its direction, he would have rounded Cuba, and found that it was not a portion of the mainland, and might have discovered the continent by being carried by the gulf stream either to Florida or Yucatan. After sailing several days toward Babique, as he supposed, he encountered a furious storm, and when it had cleared away, he found that the *Pinta*, commanded by Pinzon had disappeared.

This very much disturbed the commander. He knew that Pinzon was jealous of him, and his first impression was that Pinzon had sailed for Spain for the purpose of securing the honors of the discovery of India. This altered the intention of Columbus, and he gave up the Babique trip, and returned to the coast of Cuba. This was in November.

When Columbus reached the eastern limits of Cuba, he saw in the southeast some highlands, toward which he sailed, and discovered Hayti. If it were possible, Columbus admired this island more than even Cuba; its sole fault was that it furnished no signs of gold. The

inhabitants were found to be superior in build and look to the natives of the islands hitherto visited. They were boundlessly hospitable ; their doors were never closed ; their condition was the ideal of a perfect life in a state of nature.

The climate was equable and salubrious ; no labor was necessary to plant, or cultivate articles of food. All these were supplied by beneficent nature. Peter Martyr, who gained his information from conversations with Columbus, pays high compliments to the honesty and the integrity of the natives of this favored island. The land is not owned by individuals, and "hence mine and thine have no place among them. They are content with so little, that in so large a country they have rather superfluity than scarcity ; so that they seem to live in the golden world, without toil, living in open gardens ; not entrenched with dykes, divided with hedges, or defended with walls. They deal truly with each other without laws, without books, and without judges. They take him for an evil and mischievous man, who taketh pleasure in doing hurt to another ; and albeit they delight not in superfluities, yet they make provisions for the increase of such roots whereof they make their bread, contented with

such simple diet whereby health is preserved and disease avoided."

This picture is generally confirmed by contemporary historians. All of them agree, in presenting the life of these islanders as approaching to the golden state of poetical felicity; living under the absolute but easy rule of their caciques, free from pride, with few wants, and abundant country, a happily tempered climate, and a natural disposition to careless and indolent enjoyment.

On the 14th of December Columbus made another attempt to find the Island of Babique; and on his route visited an island lying opposite the harbor of Conception, to which, from the great number of turtles in the vicinity he gave the name of Tortugas, and which was the island which later became the headquarters of the renowned buccaneers. For some reason Columbus abandoned his search for Babique, and nothing more is said of it in any of his records.

He visited Hispaniola where he obtained but little gold, although whatever the natives possessed they readily presented him, and was well treated by the islanders. He was called upon by the young cacique, who came carried by four men on a sort of a litter, and escorted

by two hundred of his subjects. If anything was given him to eat or drink he merely tasted it and sent it to his men on the outside. What probably most pleased Columbus was that the young chief gave him two pieces of gold. The admiral tried to explain to him something about the greatness of Spain; but the cacique would not believe that there was a region on the earth that produced these wonderful people and things; he believed that they were immortal, and that the people and kings of whom he talked must exist somewhere in the sky.

On the 19th of December, 1492, he sailed and discovered an island which he named St. Thomas, where they were visited by a large canoe filled with natives, who brought the admiral a present of a broad belt, wrought ingeniously with colored beads and bones; and a wooden mask, the eyes and nose and tongue of which were of gold.

A few days later, Columbus set sail from port St. Thomas. The wind was from the land, but so light that the ship made little progress. Columbus finding the sea calm and smooth, retired to rest, not having slept the preceding night. He no sooner disappeared than the helmsman gave the tiller in charge to one of the ship's boys and went to sleep. The rest of the sailors took

advantage of the absence of Columbus and also went to sleep. The ship floated up on a sand bank and it was impossible to get her off. The shock opened several leaks, and the admiral and his men took refuge on board the caravel.

It speaks well for the honesty of the cacique, who when he heard of the wreck was affected even to tears, that he immediately sent his people with all the canoes they could muster, and removed the effects to a point near his dwelling, where he placed armed guards around them until proper shelter could be prepared for them. Not the most trifling article was taken during the work of transporting the goods.

"So loving, so tractable, so peaceable," says Columbus in his journal, "that I swear to your majesties there is not in the world a better nation, nor a better land. They love their neighbors as themselves; and their discourse is sweet and gentle, and accompanied with a smile; and though it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy."

So pleasant was this island, and so friendly the cacique that Columbus concluded that it would be a good place to establish the germ of a colony. The wreck of the caravel gave

materials for a fort upon which were placed her guns, and provisions enough to maintain the garrison for a year. The natives gave all possible assistance to the building of the fortress, little dreaming what would be the effect upon themselves in the future.

In ten days the fortress was completed, so ample was the assistance of the natives. He gave the place the name of La Navidad, or the Nativity, in memory of having escaped a wreck on Christmas Day. He selected thirty-nine of the men who volunteered to remain on the island, including a physician, ship carpenter, cooper, tailor, and gunner, all expert at their several professions. And then he set sail for Spain on the 4th of January 1493.

On the 6th, a sailor at the masthead saw the "Pinta" at a distance. When the ships joined each other, the admiral had a conversation with Pinzon at which the latter tried to excuse his desertion saying that he had been driven to part company by the weather, and had ever since been trying to rejoin the admiral. Private information received by Columbus showed that he had remained in Hispaniola several weeks trading with the natives, and had collected a considerable quantity of gold,

half of which he retained as captain ; the rest he divided among his men to secure their fidelity and secrecy.

CHAPTER XIV

HOMeward BOUND

The point where Pinzon had traded with the natives was a river called by the natives Yaqui. Columbus landed there for a short time and found many particles of gold in the sand at its mouth. He mentions in his journal that he saw two mermaids, who elevated themselves above the surface of the sea. They were not the beautiful green that they are generally rumored to be ; it is supposed that they must have been sea-calves.

The natives of the place complained that Pinzon had, on his previous visit, violently carried off four men and two girls. Finding that they were retained on the "Pinta" to be taken to Spain to be sold as slaves, the admiral immediately ordered that they be restored to their homes, with many presents, and well clothed. Pinzon objected, used violent lan-

guage, and gave them up with great unwillingness.

A little beyond this they anchored near a spot where they found the natives very different from those they had hitherto met. Las Casas says of them :—

"They were of a ferocious aspect and hideously painted. Their hair was long, tied behind, and decorated with the feathers of parrots and other birds of gaudy plumage. Some were armed with war clubs; others had bows of the length of those used by the English archers, with arrows of slender reeds pointed with hard wood, or tipped with bone or the tooth of a fish. Their swords were of palm-wood, as hard and heavy as iron; not sharp, but broad, nearly of the thickness of two fingers, and capable, with one blow, of cleaving through a helmet to the very brains. Though thus prepared for combat, they made no attempt to molest the Spaniards; on the contrary, they sold them two of their bows and several of their arrows, and one of them was induced to go on board the admiral's ship."

This warrior, who was one of ferocious looks and undaunted manner, spoke of an island called Nantolino, which was peopled by women who received visits from the Caribs yearly for

the sake of continuing the population of their island. All the male progeny resulting from such visits were delivered to the fathers, the female remaining with the mother.

It is probable that this Amazonian island is another of the delusions of Columbus, based on the work of Marco Polo. The latter describes two islands near the coast of Asia, one occupied solely by the women, the other by men, between which a like intercourse existed ; and Columbus supposing himself in that vicinity, easily believed the statement of the native to agree with the description of the Venetian.

A boat was sent out to the land, carrying the single warrior, with the hope of securing a trade for gold. As the boat neared the shore, a large number of natives armed with bows and arrows, war clubs and javelins, were seen among the trees. The Spaniards attempted to purchase some of their weapons to take home as curiosities. Two bows were obtained ; but suddenly they rushed back to the place where they had left their weapons, picked them up, and returned with cords as if to bind the Spaniards. The latter immediately attacked them, wounded two, and routed the others. This was the first contest with the Indians, and the

first time that native blood was shed by the white men in the New World.

Columbus now, the 16th of January, headed his caravels for Spain, and during the remainder of the month the trade winds retarded him, blowing strongly from the east. He was also detained by the bad sailing of the "Pinta" which could carry but little sail. On the 12th of February they encountered a tremendous storm which lasted for three days, and was accompanied by awful thunder and lightning. One can fancy how perilous was the condition of these two vessels, which had no decks, and over which the waves dashed every moment. During the storm the "Pinta" was driven southward and disappeared.

Columbus endeavored to propitiate the heavens by religious acts. A number of beans, equal to the number of persons on board were put into a hat, on one of which was cut the sign of the cross. It was agreed that each of the crew should draw from the hat, and the one that secured the marked bean would make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santa Maria de Guadalupe, bearing a white taper of five pounds weight. The admiral was the first to put his hand in and the lot fell on him. A second lot was cast in the same way for a pilgrimage to

the chapel of Our Lady of Loretto, which fell upon a seaman, Pedro de Villa ; and a third for a pilgrimage to Santa Clara de Moguer, to perform a solemn mass, and to watch all night in the chapel, which fell on Columbus.

These acts did not seem to affect the tempest in the least, for it raged with all its old violence. Conceiving that the ceremonials were not sufficiently strong, something more difficult was devised. What they selected was something quite unique. They made a vow that if spared, at the first place they landed, they would go in procession, barefooted, and in their shirts, to offer prayers and thanksgiving in some church dedicated to the Holy Virgin. In addition to these efforts to placate the tempest, each one made a private vow to perform some religious act at his favorite shrine.

Still the storm was relentless. It grew more wild and frightful, and each man gave himself up for lost. Columbus was very much alarmed fearing that the "Pinta" had foundered, and that the whole history of the discoveries rested upon the security of his own feeble bark, which any moment might be buried in the ocean.

An expedient suggested itself by which, in case the ship perished, the glory of his discov-

eries might be preserved. He wrote an account of his voyage on parchment, sealed it, directed it to the king and queen, with a promise of a thousand ducats to the person who should deliver the package unopened. He then wrapped it in a waxed cloth, which he placed in the center of a cake of wax, and enclosed the whole in a barrel, which he threw into the sea. He also prepared another copy of the same, and placed it in a barrel on the poop, so that if the caravel should be swallowed up, the barrel would float off and survive.

February 15th land was seen, and they soon came in sight of an island. For two days they tried to reach it but were driven off by the tempest. After beating off and on for several days, they landed, found it to be one of the Azores, belonging to the Portuguese. For fifteen days they had been beset by a gale of unexampled fury. The next morning they undertook to carry out their vow for a procession to a chapel dedicated to the Virgin. One-half of the crew barefooted and in their shirts moved to the chapel; while Columbus awaited their return to perform the same ceremony with the others. Scarcely had they begun their prayers when they were surrounded by a mob that took them all prisoners.

The ship with the remainder of the crew was driven out to sea by the storm, and returned to the island at the end of two days. The governor of the island came aboard, and much wrangling ensued between him and Columbus. The governor finally announced that if they were really in the service of Spain, he would render them every service. The next day the boat and crew were liberated.

It was later ascertained that the arrest was made by the order of the king of Portugal, who was jealous; fearing that the expedition of Columbus, might interfere with his own discoveries, he had sent orders to the islands and distant ports to detain him wherever he should be met with.

Castaneda, the governor of St. Mary's, had expected to surprise Columbus in the chapel, but failing in this he had been obliged to let him go, as his papers showed that he had in no way intrenched on the possessions of the Portuguese.

CHAPTER XV

VISITS PORTUGAL—THEN HOME

When Columbus left St. Mary's Island, he again encountered a tremendous tempest, during which his vessel became unmanageable. Destruction menaced the frail vessel ; its sails were carried away, and the ship drifted under bare poles.

Another attempt was made to placate the assumed wrath of heaven by casting lots to select one to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santa Maria de la Cueva, in Huelva, and strange to say, Columbus, for the third time
• drew the winning number. Still, despite this additional effort to mitigate the anger of the fates, the tempest increased in fury.

As the pilgrimage determined on to the shrine of Santa Maria de la Cueva did seem to produce the cessation of the tempest, the ingenious mariners, persistent in their devotion, unanimously vowed that if the commotion of

the elements could be made to subside, they would "fast" on bread and water the next Saturday. The fates seemed to regard this proffer as something offensive, and at once increased the height of the waves, and the fury of the winds.

All the next day the storm increased in dimensions, lightnings rent the black clouds, and hoarse incessant thunders shook the very firmament. Not a soul on the "Nina" expected ever to reach the shore alive. It must have been a distracting thought to Columbus as he reflected on the smooth seas, the warm breezes, and the spiced airs which greeted his arrival in the New World, among heathen, and the fearful buffeting which he was undergoing as he neared the shores of the old world, occupied by Christian shrines, churches, crosses, and all the creations of a high civilization.

The night following the day was, if possible, still worse in the developments of the raging tempest. Land was discovered as the day closed, and as the admiral did not know where they were nor how to manage the vessel, the vicinity of land increased his apprehensions. He lowered sails, and kept out at sea as much as possible till daylight, when he found that he was opposite the mouth of the

Tagus River, which was pouring into the sea from the soil of Portugal.

Columbus knew of the hostility of Portugal toward his expedition, but the storm left him no other recourse, and he was forced to seek shelter in the Portuguese port. He immediately sent off messengers to the Spanish sovereigns of his arrival, and communication to the king of Portugal, asking permission to visit Lisbon. The excuse which Columbus makes for this last communication is that the report having become circulated that his ship was laden with gold, anchorage in the vicinity of the mouth of the Tagus was not safe. On the other hand, there is a belief abroad that the admiral, finding himself so near the Portuguese Court, could not resist the opportunity to revenge himself for the slight put on him by King John in rejecting his proposals.

It was an ingenious scheme to show the monarch how short-sighted he had been in his action when Columbus appeared at his Court and humbly asked his support. How John would writhe with chagrin and jealousy when he learned that Portugal, which had hitherto stood far in advance for its geographical expeditions and discoveries, was now excelled by a

despised rival nation which had never developed any desire for maritime explorations.

On the 8th of March a letter came from King John, complimenting the admiral on his achievements, and inviting him to visit the Court, then at Valparaiso. He set out accompanied only by his pilot, and was met by an escort which conducted him to the royal palace, where he was received with the highest honors. A long conversation occurred between the two, in which the king appeared very much pleased with what Columbus related of his discoveries, but it is not impossible that, in his inner soul, he was overwhelmed with rage and mortification over what he had lost.

King John thought, or pretended to think, that Columbus had possibly trenched on his territorial domains which had been granted him by a papal bull, and which included all the western coast of Africa and as far as the Indies, providing that the land should be discovered by the Portuguese. The king submitted this view to his advisers who eagerly agreed with his majesty, among whom were some of those who advised with scorn the rejection of proposals which Columbus had made to Portugal.

They spared no falsehood, or detraction to belittle the reputed discoveries of Columbus,

and some of them even went to the wretched extremity of advocating the assassination of the admiral; a fact which is affirmed by both Spanish and Portuguese historians. King John was too magnanimous to adopt this advice, or too cowardly, but he adopted a plan which was scarcely less mean. He resolved to let Columbus return to Spain, and before the latter would be ready to make a second voyage, he would send a naval force, under guidance of two Portuguese sailors who had accompanied Columbus, and take possession of the new region, and retain possession by force of arms.

Columbus returned to Spain, entering the harbor of Palos on the 15th of March, 1493, having sailed from the same port August 3rd of the preceding year, having been absent a little over seven months.

CHAPTER XVI

THE RECEPTION AT PALOS

Columbus left Palos on a Friday, first discovered land on a Friday, and re entered Palos on a Friday. It may be a question, in view of all the things connected with his voyage and personal experiences, whether or not this incidental connection with the usually ominous Friday may not have been portentous of ill-luck.

In the spring of 1493, while the Spanish court was still at Barcelona, letters were received from Columbus, announcing his return to Spain, and his success in finding land in the western ocean. The joy and astonishment created by this informaton were in proportion to the skepticism with which his project had been originally viewed. Ferdinand and Isabella were naturally eager to learn the extent and the like of the said discovery, and they

sent instructions that he should come to Barcelona at once.

Here may be inserted a letter from Columbus which was written at Lisbon to the treasurer Sanchez, in which he displays his supreme satisfaction.

"Let processions be made, festivals held, temples filled with branches and flowers, for Christ rejoices on earth as in Heaven, seeing the future redemption of souls. Let us rejoice also for the temporal benefit likely to result not only to Spain, but to all Christendom."

Could Columbus have foreseen the events of the next century, there would possibly have been a modification of his pious exaltation.

It may readily be imagined that when the little caravel, "Nina," appeared in the harbor of Palos, a tremendous excitement was the result. For months the community had believed that it had been swallowed up by the ocean, for the weather which they had experienced during the voyage, was the most tempestuous and savage within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The crew of the vessel had many relatives and friends at Palos.

The latter thronged to the landing with tumultuous haste in order to satisfy themselves that the vessel was a reality and not an appar-

ition. When they saw their old acquaintances were all safe, and the many things that they had brought back, attesting the success of the voyage, they shook the air with roars of enthusiastic joy. The entire population accompanied Columbus and his men to a church ; thanksgivings were offered up for their safe return, and the bells joined giving voice to the general satisfaction.

The admiral hurried to leave Palos to meet the monarchs, taking with him specimens of many kinds found in the land that he supposed was India. Several natives of the islands wearing their barbaric decorations of collars, bracelets and other ornaments of gold, rudely fashioned, accompanied him. He also exhibited considerable quantities of the same metal in dust or in crude masses. "Among other specimens was a lump of gold of sufficient magnitude," says Salazar de Mendoza. "to be fashioned into a vessel to contain the host, thus converting the first fruits of the new dominion to pious uses."

Columbus had in his collection many vegetable exotics, possessing aromatic and medicinal virtues, many kinds of birds, whose variety of gaudy plumage gave a brilliant effect to the pageant. He had also some quadrupeds

quite unknown in Europe. Throngs impeded his progress at every step.

At Seville, a large and active city, every point of advantage which could afford a glimpse of him, is described to have been crowded with spectators. When he reached Barcelona, he was met by the nobility and cavaliers connected with the court, who, with the authorities of the city met him at the gates and escorted him to the presence of the royal couple.

Ferdinand and Isabella were seated under a superb canopy of state awaiting his arrival. They rose to receive him, gave him their hands to salute, and caused him to be seated before them, which was a most astonishing mark of condescension, to an humble person of the grade of Columbus in the ceremonious court of Castile.

Peter Martyr says: "It was indeed, the proudest moment in the life of Columbus. He had fully established the proof of his long-contested theory in the face of argument, sophistry, sneer, skepticism, and contempt. He had achieved this, not by chance, but by calculations supported through the most adverse circumstances, by consummate conduct. The honors paid him which had hitherto been reserved for rank, or fortune, or military success, purchased by the

blood and tears of thousands, were in his case, an homage to intellectual power successfully asserted in behalf of the noblest interests of humanity."

All the contemporary and later writers are in the highest degree complimentary to the bearing of Columbus at this interview. According to them his manner was sedate and dignified, but warmed by the glow of natural enthusiasm. He enumerated the islands that he had visited, expatiated on the temperate character of the climate, and the capacity of the soil for every variety of production. He dwelt more at large on the precious metals to be found in these islands, which he inferred, less from the specimens actually obtained, than from the uniform testimony of the natives, to their abundance in the unexplored regions of the interior.

Finally, he pointed out the wide field there was for Christian effort in the illumination of a race of men whose minds were not wedded to any system of idolatry, and who were prepared by their extreme simplicity for the reception of a pure and uncorrupted doctrine. This last consideration touched Isabella's heart most sensibly. It was only about a year later when the priest and the musketeer were well on in

their respective works of killing, or converting, or both, the unbiased natives.

The report of Columbus excited a sensation among the scientific men in all parts of Europe. The same men who had heard of his plans with entire indifference, now felicitated each other in being connected with an age in which had been developed so grand an event.

Peter Martyr, who in his very extended letters, and whom as a contemporary of Columbus, had not even mentioned the preparations for the voyage of discovery, now lavished the most unbounded panegyric on the results; which he contemplated with the eye of a philosopher, having far less reference to considerations of profit or policy, than to the prospect which they unfolded of enlarging the boundaries of knowledge.

Many of the scholars of the day fell into the errors of Columbus to the effect that the land that he had discovered bordered on the eastern shores of Asia, and lay close to the vast and opulent region depicted in such vivid colors by Mandeville and Polo. On account of this misapprehension, the new region was now known as the West Indies, a name by which they are still recognized by the world and in the titles of the Spanish crown.

Efforts were at once begun to push the exploration of the new found regions. A board was established on the management of Indian affairs, and an office for the transaction of business was instituted at Seville, and a custom house placed under its direction at Cadiz. The commercial regulations forbade the new territories free intercourse with foreign nations, and only Spanish subjects were allowed to deal with them. No one could trade or even visit the Indies without a license. Commodities of every description for the supply of the fleet were exempted from duty. The owners of all vessels in the ports of Andalusia, were required to hold them in readiness for the expedition, and authority was given to impress officers and men wherever necessary. Mechanics were enlisted for service in the new territory; and in order to defray the heavy charges of which the Government in addition to the regular resources had recourse to a loan, and to these questrated property of the exiled Jews.

At that period the unfortunate Jews had reason to congratulate themselves that the money wrung from them was used with the result that hundreds of thousands of Gentiles and heathen lost their property and their lives.

CHAPTER XVII

PREPARATIONS FOR A SECOND VOYAGE TO THE NEW WORLD

Ample provisions were made for caring for the souls and bodies of the natives; for the former were twelve priests, for the latter artillery, powder, muskets, lances, corselets and cross-bows, many of the soldiers preferring the last-named to the arquebus which was fired with a match lock and was so heavy as to require an iron rest. The pious portion of the outfit was equally well supplied with ammunition. Bernardo Boyle, a benedictine monk who was considered a man of great talent and sanctity, but who was in reality a politician, was selected as one of the religious element. The mission was provided with all necessary supplies. The queen supplied from her own chapel the ornaments and vestments to be used in all solemn ceremonies. She desired that great care should be taken of their religious

instruction; that they should be well treated, and insisted that Columbus should punish all Spaniards who should be guilty of injustice or outrage toward any of the natives.

The six Indians brought over by Columbus were baptized with great ceremony, the royal family acting as sponsors. It was hoped that when they returned to India they would be valuable as missionaries. One of them remained in the royal household, but soon after died, when it was remarked by Herrera, the historian, that, according to what ought to be our pious belief, he was the first of his nation to enter heaven. If his pious belief were true, purgatory and hades must have necessarily been of limitless dimensions to have accommodated all the pagans who had been damned.

There was a long series of vexatious negotiations between the Spanish monarchy, and John II. of Portugal. As said before the latter prepared a large naval force whose ostensible purpose was African discoveries in Africa, but whose real purpose was to take possession of the West Indies. Ferdinand was too shrewd a politician to be deceived by this action of the Portuguese king. He wrote two letters to the Portuguese monarch which he sent by a special messenger. These two letters were exactly

unlike. One of them returned thanks for the hospitality showed Columbus, and asked that the Portuguese fleet be prohibited from visiting the new country, the same as Spain had done in the case of the African possessions of the Portuguese. If the ambassador who carried the letters discovered that Portugal was going to dispatch the fleet to the new world, then he was to present the other letter which was a peremptory order not to send the armament as proposed.

There was a long diplomatic wrangle with the result that Ferdinand who was much the shrewder of the two, managed to gain sufficient time for Columbus to conclude his preparations, and start on his second journey. Columbus was written to repeatedly to hurry. He, however, needed no spurring, and made all haste possible. He issued the requisition for ships and crews and soon succeeded in concentrating a fleet of seventeen vessels. Horses were shipped, cattle and domestic animals of all kinds were put on board.

A vast excitement prevailed in regard to this trip. Everybody wished to participate in it, many of the people of highest rank as well as of the common people thronging forward for admission as emigrants to the new world. Las

Casas relates some facts interesting in regard to a young cavalier. Don Alonso de Ojeda, who was one of the men who engaged in the expedition. He says :

"He was celebrated for his remarkable personal endowments and his daring spirit, and who distinguished himself among the early discoverers by many perilous expeditions. He was cousin-german to the venerable Father Alonzo de Ojeda, Inquisitor of Spain, and served in the wars against the Moors. He was of small stature, but vigorous make, well-proportioned, dark complexioned, of handsome animated countenance, and incredible strength and agility. Expert at all kinds of weapons, accomplished in all manly and war-like exercises, an admirable horseman, and a partisan soldier of the highest order. Bold of heart, free of spirit, open of hand ; fierce in fight, quick in brawl, but ready to forgive and prone to forget an injury ; he was for a long time the idol of the rash and roving youth who engaged in the early expedition to the new world, and was the hero of many wonderful tales."

Las Casas gives an anecdote of one of his exploits as follows : "Queen Isabella being in the tower of the Cathedral of Seville, Ojeda, to entertain her majesty, and to give proof of

his courage and agility, mounted on a great beam which projected in the air twenty feet from the tower, at such an immense height from the ground that the people looked like dwarfs ; and it was enough to make Ojeda himself shudder to look down. Along this beam he walked briskly, and with as much confidence as if he had been pacing his chamber. When he arrived at the end, he stood on one leg, lifting the other into the air ; then turning nimbly round, he returned in the same way to the tower, unaffected by the giddy height, whence the least false step would have precipitated him and dashed him to pieces. He afterward stood with one foot on the beam, and the other against the wall of the building, and threw an orange to the summit of the tower, a proof of an immense muscular strength. Such was Alonzo de Ojeda, who soon became conspicuous among the followers of Columbus, and who was always foremost in every enterprise of an adventurous nature ; he courted peril as if for the very love of danger, and seemed to fight more for the pleasure of fighting than for the distinction."

It was decided at the start to limit the number of persons who were to go in the expedition to a thousand, but such was the

pressure of volunteers who wished to enlist without pay, that the number reached twelve hundred. Others entered as stowaways so that finally there were at least fifteen hundred. Columbus was hastened in starting before the time that he had fixed on by the report that the Portuguese had sent out an armed ship from Madeira which was headed west. An account of this was sent to the sovereigns, and remonstrances sent to King John who said that the ship had gone without permission, and that he would send caravels to bring her back. The Spanish monarchs believed that this was simply a subterfuge, and Columbus was urged to start at once.

On the 25th of September, 1493, his fleet was gathered in the Bay of Cadiz. It consisted of three large ships, and and fourteen caravels.

All were full of animation and hope. The two sons of Columbus, Diego and Fernando, had come to witness his departure. Word was given to weigh anchor early in the morning and before sunrise the fleet was under way. They reached the Canaries on the first of October. On the evening of the second of November, Columbus discovered an island to which he gave the name of Dominica, from having discovered it on Sunday.

CHAPTER XVIII

GUADALOUPE AND THE CARIBS

The island which Columbus discovered was one of the group of Antilles, which he took possession of for Spain. Two days later, he sighted an island on which was a volcano and to which, with the purpose of complimenting a Catholic saint, he gave the name of Guadeloupe.

He landed, and found a village of thirty houses from which the natives had fled in terror at the sight of the fleet. The houses were different in form and construction from those seen on any other island, being more roomy and of a stronger construction. The furniture was also superior to that which the explorers had before seen; the beds were hammocks of cotton netting. There was cotton cloth of a fair texture and an abundance of the raw material. They found bows and arrows, geese the same as the domestic fowls of Europe; and

on this island the explorers first saw the delicious pine-apple.

Among other curiosities was a pan which had the appearance of being of iron. What much excited their wonder was the finding in one of the houses of the stern-post of a ship, whose origin excited speculation. It had probably drifted to the island driven by the trades.

Still another thing excited their horror and disgust as well as their astonishment. They found human bones whose flesh they concluded had been eaten. There were also skulls which were evidently used for household purposes. Those hideous remnants convinced the Spaniards that the island was occupied by cannibals, or Caribs; the next day, the conviction was confirmed.

Sailing further along the coast, a boat went ashore and brought back a boy and several women, from whom Columbus learned that the island belonged to the predatory, man-eating Caribs. He also learned that they were in league with another island, and went in their canoes, made from logs, a distance, sometimes as far as one hundred and fifty leagues to pillage on other islands, capturing men whom they ate, and women of whom they made servants, or worse.

Columbus had a severe fright while at this infernal retreat of the murderous Caribs. One day he learned that a captain of one of the caravels, and eight men were missing ; they had gone ashore without leave of absence, and had disappeared in the woods. Parties to search for them scoured the country in every direction ; guns were fired, trumpets blown, with no results. The searching parties discovered abundant evidence of man-eating practices. Human limbs hung from beams in the houses, being "cured" like hams in a country smoke-house. There was the still-bleeding head of a young man, parts of whose body were roasting before a fire.

Some days passed and the stragglers did not return ; and then Ojeda took a party of forty men, and started on a renewed search. He found a fine region, with trees shedding aromatic odors ; honey in hollow trees, and an abundance of fruit, but he did not find what he specifically went for, the stragglers. The admiral gave them up and was to sail away when the wanderers suddenly appeared almost dead from fatigue. They had entered the forest, and lost their bearings, and it was only by sheer chance that they reached the shore of which they followed till they found the fleet. The captain

was put under arrest and the privates who followed him, were put on half rations. They learned from some women whom they brought back with them that the king and all the men were absent on a plundering expedition.

On the 10th of November, he resumed his course, passing many islands, and naming them as he went along. He sent a boat ashore at an island for water and named it Santa Cruz. Here he witnessed a specimen of Carib audacity and courage which was of a novel character. While in the village, a boat filled with natives came around a head-land near the ships; two of the inmates of the canoe were women. They were so engaged in staring at the unexpected sight, that the boat at the village had time to run out and intercept the retreat of the natives.

They immediately dropped their paddles, picked up their bows and arrows and began using them with astonishing rapidity and skill. The Spaniards ran against the canoe and upset it, but it made little difference to the natives. They used their bows in the water as rapidly as they did from the boat. The women took part in the fight, and wielded their bows with as much dexterity as the men. They were captured with great difficulty, and not till one

of them had been run through with a lance, from which he soon after died.

The natives were a frightful collection of semi-monsters, with long, coarse hair, and faces hideously painted. Just why they were attacked when they wished to escape, and had done the strangers no harm, it is difficult to explain. Columbus was very careful to avoid irritating the natives, but in this instance it seems a case of inexcusable shedding of blood. One Spaniard died from being hit by a poisoned arrow launched by one of the women.

The fleet sailed on and passed hundreds of islands, and finally anchored in front of what is now known as Porto Rico. Two days later he left the Caribbean sea, and sailed for Hispaniola, which he reached on the 22d of November.

Hispaniola is the island now known as Hayti, which was, according to all accounts, a most charming island at the advent of the Spaniards. Here Columbus liberated a young Indian who had been taken to Spain, and converted. He was loaded with presents with which he was expected to dazzle his friends, and induce them to visit the ship. He left, promising to return soon, but was never seen or heard of again.

Up to this period Columbus had experienced

uninterrupted months of quiet, crowned with honors, and not a cloud in the sky of his life. It was while he was at anchor in a harbor of Hayti that the turning point in his life occurred. It was a date from which his descent was almost as rapid as had been his rise.

Some sailors who were ashore found the bodies of a man and boy with a rope of grass around the neck of the former. They were so much decomposed that it was impossible to pronounce as to whether they were Spanish or native. The facts were reported to the admiral, who felt that they were an omen of evil. On the next day all doubt was dissipated by the finding of two other bodies near the same, one of which had a beard which proved incontestibly that the remains were those of a European.

Filled with apprehension, Columbus immediately sailed for La Navidad, where, on his last voyage he had built a fort from the timbers of the Santa Maria, and in which he had left a garrison. On the evening of the 27th he reached a point opposite La Navidad. It was too dark to enter the harbor; and coming to anchor he fired a couple of guns to notify the garrison of his presence. There was no response from the shore.

About midnight a canoe containing a single Indian came along side, and was taken aboard. He said that many of the Spanish garrison had died of sickness; others had quarrelled and fought among themselves, and still others had removed to a distant part of the island where they had taken Indian wives. The Indian left promising to return in the morning and bring with him the cacique, Guancanagari, whom Columbus had met on his former trip, and who had then given every evidence of a warm friendship for Columbus.

Morning came and the day advanced, and the cacique did not come. For a time it was thought that the Indian might have taken too much wine the preceding night, and that on the way to the shore, the canoe might have been upset and the occupant drowned. When Columbus had visited the harbor before, the natives had come to see them by hundreds, the water was covered with canoes, and innumerable Indians were seen in the woods on the shore. Now there was not a boat nor an Indian in sight. After impatiently waiting until near night, Columbus sent some men ashore to look over the situation. The men found the fortress. It was a complete ruin. It had been beaten down and had the appearance of having been burned, and its

contents stolen. Broken chests, spoiled provisions, and remnants of European garments were scattered around. Two or three Indians were seen in the distance among the trees as if watching them, but disappeared when they noticed that they were seen.

Columbus was very much afflicted by this intelligence, and the next day went to look over the scene in person. A search was made for dead bodies, but none could be found. No traces of the garrison were to be seen, but broken utensils and torn vestments were scattered about in the grass. It was hoped that some of the garrison might yet be alive, and the cannon were fired with the hope that any of the survivors who were within hearing might come out, but no one made an appearance.

On looking for the village of the cacique, it was found to be a heap of burned ruins which showed that he had shared in the disaster of the garrison.

Orders had been left with the officers of the garrison to bury all the treasure they could get hold of, or in case of an emergency throw it into the well of the fortress. Excavations were made all over the ruins and the well was cleared out. Nothing was found. He proceeded to inspect the adjacent shore in boats and some

distance away he came to a village the inhabitants of which had left taking some of their goods with them and hiding the remainder in the grass. In the houses were European articles which evidently had not been procured by barter, such as stockings, pieces of cloth and an anchor of the caravel which had been wrecked and a beautiful Moorish robe folded in the form in which it had been brought from Spain.

The digging revealed no treasure, but it brought to light the bodies of eleven men buried in various places, and which were known by their clothing to be Europeans. The grass had grown on their graves, showing that they had been some time buried.

Some Indians came in finally, and in time the facts of the fate of the garrison were to some extent brought out. Concerning what occurred after Columbus had left Oviedo, he says: "With the exception of the commander Don Diego Arana, and one or two others, the men who were left behind were but little calculated to follow the precepts of so prudent a person, or to discharge the critical duties enjoined upon them. They were principally men of the lowest order, or mariners who knew not how to conduct themselves with restraint or sobriety on shore. No sooner had the admiral departed,

than all his commands and counsels died away from their minds. Though a mere handful of men surrounded by savage tribes, and dependent upon their own prudence and good conduct, and upon the good will of the natives for their very existence, they soon began to indulge in the most wanton abuses. Some were prompted by rapacious avarice, and sought to possess themselves, by all kinds of wrongful means, of the golden ornaments and other valuable property of the natives. Others were grossly sensual, and not content with the two or three wives allowed to each, by the cacique, seduced the wives and daughters of the Indians.

"Fierce brawls ensued among them about their ill-gotten spoils, and the favors of the Indian women, and the natives beheld with astonishment the beings whom they had worshipped, as descended from the skies, abandoned to the grossest earthly passions, and raging against each other with worse than brutal ferocity."

CHAPTER XIX

FURTHER FACTS IN REGARD TO LA NAVIDAD

It was further ascertained that the garrison had not maintained military discipline. It was fruitless that Don Diego de Arana interfered ; all order, subordination and unity disappeared. Many left the fortress, and lived about the neighborhood ; each joined with some other one in a conspiracy to injure and spoil the others. Factions broke out, and assisted to complete the ruin ; two men who were lieutenants, left by Columbus to succeed the commander in case of accident, undertook to get an equal share in the authority and if possible obtain control. Frequent affrays succeeded, in which some of the Spaniards were killed. The two lieutenants, having failed, left the fort with nine of their adherents, and a number of their women.

They heard marvelous accounts of the mines of Cibao, and went to that district expecting

to secure much treasure. In going to this point, they went outside the region of the friendly territory of Guacanagari. The section where they went was in the interior of the island, a locality ruled by the famous Caonabo, who was a Carib by birth, and had the fierceness and enterprise of his nation. He came as an adventurer to Hispaniola, and by his war-like exploits had put himself at the head of all the other caciques.

He was the hero of the island when the ships of the white men reached the shore. He was sharp enough to understand that his consequence would decline before such intruders. The quarrels and excesses of those that remained, while they moved his detestation, inspired him with increasing confidence. No sooner did the two lieutenants with their following take refuge in his dominions, than he put them to death.

He then formed a league with the cacique of Marien, and made a sudden attack upon the fortress. Descending with his warriors, and traversing great tracts of forests with profound secrecy, he arrived in the vicinity of the village without being discovered. But ten men were in the fortress with Arana, and these had no guard. The rest were quartered in

houses in the neighborhood. In the dead of the night, when all were wrapped in sleep, Caonabo and his warriors burst upon the place with frightful yells, carried the fort, and surrounded and set fire to the houses in which the rest of the white men were asleep. Eight of the Spaniards fled to the sea side, pursued by the savages, and rushing into the waves were drowned. All the rest were massacred.

Guacanagari and his subjects fought faithfully in defence of their guests, but not being of a war-like character, were easily routed; the cacique was wounded by the hand of Caonabo, and his village was burned to the ground.

Such was the humiliating and bloody termination of the first effort to establish civilization in the New World. On this point Irving says:

"It presents in a diminutive compass an epitome of the gross vices which degrade civilization, and the grand political errors which sometimes subvert the mightiest empires. All law and order being relaxed by corruption and licentiousness, public good was sacrificed to private interests and passion, the community was convulsed by divers factions and dissensions, until the whole was shaken asunder by two aspiring demagogues, ambitious of the

command of a petty fortress in the wilderness, and the supreme control of eight-and-thirty men."

The cacique, Guacanagari, did not entirely escape suspicion of complicity in the destruction of the fortress. One of the captains of the vessels was invited by the brother of the cacique to visit him. He went to the village where the cacique was confined, and found him in a hammock, surrounded by seven of his wives. Columbus also visited him, and to make an impression brought with him his officers all in their armor. The cacique shed many tears as he related the destruction of La Navidad, and showed several of his subjects who had been wounded evidently by Indian weapons. The leg of the cacique had been, as he asserted, struck by a stone. A surgeon examined it and found no sign of a wound. A good many of the Spaniards looked upon his lameness as made-up, and the story of the battle an invention to cover up his own duplicity.

The priest, Father Boyle, more than any other believed in his guilt, and insisted that Columbus should make an example of the chief. This priest was of a vindictive spirit, and was possessed of a willingness to persecute and torture characteristic of a member of the Inqui-

sition. Columbus thought that it would be impolitic on the strength of a mere suspicion, to disturb the relations between the natives and the Spaniards, and interfere with their operation on the island. The majority of his officers agreed with him, and thus the inquisitorial designs of the friar were balked.

The cacique was invited to visit the ship. He had been astonished when he had seen the two caravels on the first trip, and now his amazement was vastly enlarged on seeing the enormous fleet, especially the admiral's ship, which was a very large vessel. The Carib prisoners were in one of the vessels in chains, and still he contemplated them with fear and shuddering. The fact that the Spaniards had invaded these terrible cannibals in their lair, and had taken them from their strongholds immeasurably increased his estimate of the tremendous powers of the white men. He was taken through the ship of the admiral. Everything was a novelty to him. The domestic fowls, cattle, sheep and swine, and other animals which had been brought over were all marvels to him; more especially was he astounded at the sight of the horses. He had been accustomed to seeing only small animals, and was astonished at their size, their great

,

strength, and terrific appearance. He believed that all these objects must have been brought from Heaven from whence the white men must have come.

A little romance occurred in connection with this visit of the cacique, which may bear narration. On the ship were ten women who had been prisoners in the hands of the Caribs, and who had been rescued by the Spaniards. There was one of them who was evidently superior to all the others, and seemed to attract the special attention of the cacique. The next morning a messenger from the cacique came on board to find out how long before the admiral would sail. In the evening the brother of the cacique came to the ship on the pretense of wishing to sell a quantity of gold ; and when an opportunity offered he was noticed to talk privately with the female prisoners, particularly with Catalina, the one whose bearing had attracted the attention of Guanacagari. At midnight when the crew were in their first sleep, Catalina woke her companions. The shore was distant three miles and the sea was very rough, but they let themselves down into the water, and swam for the shore. The watch heard them and an alarm was sounded. Chase was given, but such was the skill and strength of these

women that they reached land. Four were recaptured on the beach but Catalina and the others made their escape in the forest. Next morning Columbus sent messengers to the cacique to demand the return of the fugitives. The residence of the cacique was deserted, and not an Indian was to be seen. This desertion increased the doubts before entertained, and the cacique was generally stigmatized as a traitor to the white men, and the perfidious destroyer of the garrison. Thus ended one of the few romances involving love and women which occurred during the visits of Columbus to the New World.

CHAPTER XX

THE BUILDING OF A NEW CITY—MALADIES

The destruction of La Navidad rendered it necessary to make a beginning somewhere, and a short distance east of the site of the ruined fort the Spaniards landed and began the laying out of a city which they called Isabella. There was a spacious harbor, two rivers debouching at the point, and many other desirable features in the selected locality. One of the strongest inducements to locate at this point was the intelligence from the Indians, that the mountains of Cibao where the gold mines were situated, were not far distant. The city went up rapidly. A church, a public store-house, and a residence for the admiral were erected, all of which were built of stone, while the other houses were built of wood or plaster, reeds, or whatever else could be made available. This was the first city of the New World, and which was very appropriately named after the queen

who had given so much sympathy to the scheme of Columbus.

All the animals were taken ashore, and for a time the colonists were very happy in escaping the confinement of the ships, and finding themselves on firm land and breathing free air in place of the stagnant exhalations of the interior of the vessels. Sickness, however, soon broke out, especially among those who had suffered from sea sickness, and who had lived for a long time on damaged salt provisions and moldy biscuit. Before the houses could be built, they suffered from the exhalations of the hot, moist climate and soil, the miasmatic mists that overhung the rivers. They were sick at heart as well as body. Scarcely any of their romantic expectations had been realized. The gold regions of Cipango had not been discovered; they had fancied a region of luxury, and an opportunity for adventure and chivalrous enterprise. They found themselves confined to an island enveloped by dense forests, forced to work hard for a mere living, and only to secure comfort by the severest exertions. Gold did not lie in quantities where it could be picked up with no trouble, but was scarce, only to be obtained with the greatest difficulty.

All these things produced a profound des-

pondency, and added to the virulence of the physical diseases. Columbus, himself, was affected like the others, but his sense of responsibility sustained and supported him by forcing him to withstand prostration. He had tremendous labor whose execution was imperative; he had the oversight and management of his fleet; he had to exercise incessant vigilance, to smother embryotic dissatisfaction, which, if unchecked, might develop into open mutiny.

The attitude of the natives since the destruction of La Navidad; the menacing position of the hordes of hostile Caribs; the failure to find the wealthy city of Cipango; the comparatively small amount of gold thus far obtained, and the depressing effect the facts would have on public opinion at home; the prevailing sickness, the scarcity of supplies, all of these and other weighty difficulties bore down on him, and constituted a burden which would have crushed a man with less powers of endurance. In his case, the necessity of active exertion produced a reaction against his weighty troubles and enabled him to defy them.

His ships having been unloaded, it was necessary to send some of them home. Alarmed at the paucity of the returns which he would be obliged to make, he determined to make one

more effort before the sailing of the ships to increase the interest of the reports which he had to send to Spain. He hit on what proved to be a fairly fortunate scheme. The Indians had constantly spoken of Cibao as the place where they obtained their supplies of gold. Perhaps this might be the long sought for Cipango.

He organized an exploring party of the youngest and most courageous of his colony, and placed the company under command of the gallant knight Ojeda, whose exploits at Seville, and in the New World, have already been noticed. Orders were given for the party to visit Cibao, and learn its value. Ojeda started in 1494, greatly delighted with his mission, the more so as it carried him into the dominion of the cacique, Caonabo, who had the reputation of being a great warrior. The anticipation of a few hard blows filled his knightly soul with satisfaction.

For two days he journeyed through a country wholly deserted by its inhabitants who had fled in terror before the advance of the Spanish party. The expedition then struck a mountain region up which they climbed along a narrow path, with great difficulty. They crossed this range, and then descended to a plain in

which were many Indian villages, and whose inhabitants treated the explorers with great cordiality. In six days more they reached another chain of mountains in which were the famed regions of Cibao. They entered this section without any serious obstacle on the part of the natives, the ferocious Caonabo being absent in some other portion of his kingdom.

They found no Cipango, or any other cities populous and wealthy. Instead they found the regions in a state of nature, with naked savages who received them with great kindness. They found, however, abundant evidences of auriferous deposits. Gold in quantities shone in the sands of the mountain streams, proving the existence of lodes in the mountains. Peter Martyr says that in some places they picked up large specimens of virgin ore from the beds of the torrents, and stones richly streaked and impregnated by it. "I saw" he says, "a mass of rude gold weighing nine ounces, which Ojeda had found in one of the brooks."

Ojeda immediately returned to the harbor where his specimens and his glowing reports did much to lessen the depression which afflicted the admiral. His feelings were further relieved by hearing good reports from an exploring party which had been sent in another direc-

tion under the lead of a young cavalier named Gorvalan. As soon as possible after the return of the two expeditions, Columbus ordered twelve of his ships to return to Spain.

He sent with the returning ships specimens of the gold found by Ojeda and Gorvalan, and their enthusiastic reports of the richness of the gold region—sending Gorvalan as a messenger.

These ships carried large numbers of native products, and also the captives taken from the Caribs, who consisted of men, women and children for the purpose of having them taught the Spanish language, and being instructed in the Christian faith. Thus far, the influence of the dozen, or more ecclesiastics who had accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, was not made apparent. No conversion of the natives is spoken of up to this point. The single proselyte, after being converted and baptized in Spain came back with Columbus, and disappeared in the woods, as soon as land was reached, and never was heard of afterward. An attempt was made to influence the religious bias of the cacique. Guacanagari, whose simple, kindly nature, it was thought, made him an easy subject for conversion.

An effort was made to create a reverence for

Christian symbols, on his part, by Columbus, who offered to place about his neck a ribbon holding an image of the Virgin. It was with the greatest reluctance that the cacique permitted the proffer to be carried into effect. He had been a spectator of the profligacy, the scandalous outrages, perpetrated by the garrison of La Navidad and entertained, beyond question, a poor opinion of the Christianity which would permit such abominations.

Columbus wrote to the sovereigns asking for further supplies, and made a proposal which proves him to have been a soulless, cruel bigot. His suggestion was that when the natives sent to Spain, had been converted, they should be sold for slaves to be paid for in live stock, which should be forwarded to his colony. Fortunately the queen, who did not hesitate to expatiate tens of thousands of Jews, and to sequester their property, was too sensitive to right and wrong to permit the carrying out of this outrageous proposition. The Carib prisoners were ordered to be converted on the usual terms, baptism, or the offices of the inquisition.

The returning fleet sailed on February 2d, 1494. The specimens of gold which were taken back to Spain; the certainties of the discover-

ies of rich gold-bearing regions, had the effect to secure favorable consideration for the report of Columbus. It obliterated the scandal and the massacre, the gross mismanagement connected with La Navidad, and elevated Spanish hopes to the very zenith. Next to the discovery of gold, the greatest satisfaction was experienced over the project to build cities and extend civilization in this New World.

Peter Martyr, who cared less for gold than the majority, grew enthusiastic over the prospects. "Columbus," he says, "has begun to build a city, as he has lately written to me, and sow our seeds, and propagate our animals! Who of us shall now speak of the wonder of Saturn, and Ceres, and Triptolemus, traveling about the earth to spread new inventions among mankind? Of the Phœnicians who built Tyne, or Sidon? Or of the Phœnicians whose roving desires led them to migrate to foreign lands, to build new cities, and establish new communities?"

It was reserved to other peoples, and other times to build cities and to introduce civilization into the New World. At this time of universal pride and self-congratulation, the New World had not even been discovered. All this rejoicing on the part of jubilant Spain was premature.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FAME OF COLUMBUS ON THE WANE

Columbus, near the close of his second voyage, with three caravels made a voyage westward, during which he discovered Jamaica. During his expedition he made up his mind that Cuba was a part of the Asiatic mainland, and forced his men to sign a paper declaring their own belief to the same purport. Concerning this act Navarrete says :

"It is the frequent occurrence of such arrogant and audacious acts on the part of Columbus which explains his sad failure as an administrator, and seriously impairs the veneration in which the world would rejoice to hold him."

Returning from his expedition to the Colony, he found that affairs were not in good shape. The people were very much discontented. Justin Winsor says : "He had not himself inspired the confidence of the Governor. and his

fame as an explorer by his misfortunes as a ruler."

The papal vicar accompanied by some of his colonists had seized ships and sailed for home. The natives outraged by the cruelties practiced upon them, were attacking his fortified post. He learned from Fort St. Thomas, that the Indians of the neighborhood, were exhibiting hostility; and that Caonabo was making preparations to attack the fortress. The real cause of the grievance was that when Columbus left Fort St. Thomas, the garrison had committed innumerable outrages on the natives by robbing them of their gold, and assaulting their women.

While this general uneasiness and disaffection prevailed, his brother Bartholomew arrived from Spain with three store-ships and later came four other ships, which, in due time, were sent back to carry samples of gold and a cargo of natives to be sold as slaves. These vessels had brought information of the charges made against the admiral at the Spanish court, and his brother Diego was sent back to answer the charges in the admiral's name.

In March, 1495, Columbus led an armed force to terrify and subdue the native population. It is claimed, on excellent authority, that this

work was done with a cruelty which was beyond description.

Meanwhile, in Spain, during this period, charges were made against Columbus so thick and fast as to greatly impair his standing with his sovereigns, Juan Aguado, a friend of Columbus, was sent to the New World to investigate the condition of things, and who reached Isabella in October, taking with him Diego. Affairs were found not to be satisfactory, and after he had concluded his report, he went back to Spain in March, 1496. Columbus knowing the nature of the reports decided that it would be best for him to accompany Aguado, and make his explanation in person. They reached Cadiz in June.

The monarchs received him kindly, and promised him further outfits. However, the matter was considerably delayed. For two years he was kept waiting, and it was not till the 30th of May, 1498, that Columbus, with six ships, started on his third voyage. In truth, the enthusiasm and excitement among the people in regard to the discoveries in the New World were dying out. The reports from the new country were not in the least corroborative of the flaming narrations of Marco Polo, and the new found world was thought to be very

poor India after all. Such was the general impression : Columbus alone was not discouraged and the public treasury was opened for another voyage.

On this voyage, he discovered Trinidad July 31st, which he named from its three peaks or from the Holy Trinity ; and according to some accounts, struck the northern coast of South America, and skirted what was later known as the pearl coast. This statement that he touched the mainland is disputed, or at least that he was the first. He may have done so, but it is claimed that it before had been visited by Vesputsius.

Columbus reached the southern coast of Hayti on the 30th of August, where his colonists had built a fort and founded the town of Santo Domingo. His brother Bartholomew, although an energetic ruler, had not prevented a revolt, which had been headed by Roldan. Columbus found the insurgents still in arms, but was able to quiet them, and succeeded in attaching Roldan warmly to his interest.

During the absence of Columbus from Spain, he left but few friends to care for his reputation ; and to placate his enemies a new commissioner was sent over with plenary powers, even to suspend Columbus from command if neces-

sary. The person thus sent was Francisco de Bobadilla, who reached Santo Domingo August 23d, 1500. Diego was in command in the absence of Columbus, and refused to pay any attention to the orders of the commissioner until the return of Columbus; whereupon Bobadilla took violent possession of the crown property, and of the residence of Columbus, and when the latter returned, he and Diego were arrested and put in irons.

He was placed on a ship, the captain of which offered to remove the manacles; but Columbus refused to have them taken off, being determined to land in Spain bound as he was. And his resolution was persevered in. This degradation was greatly to his advantage. The king and queen and the people were shocked at the spectacle, and endeavored to make amends by extending to him renewed support. He proposed a new voyage and getting the royal endorsement, he was supplied with four vessels, and sailed May 9th, 1502, reaching Santo Domingo June 29th.

Nicholas de Ovando had taken the place of Bobadilla, whose administration for a year and a half had been unfortunate, and the fleet which had brought Columbus lay in front of the harbor waiting to receive Bobadilla for the return

voyage. Columbus had been instructed to avoid Hispaniola, but one of the vessels was leaking badly, and he sent a boat ashore to ask permission to enter the harbor. Permission was refused, although a storm was pending. He secured the best shelter he could and rode out the gale. The ships on which were Bobadilla and Roldan with their ill-gotten gains were wrecked, and these enemies of Columbus were drowned.*

The admiral found a small harbor where he could make his repairs, and then, July 14, sailed westward to find as he supposed, the richer portions of India, in exchange for the barbarous outlying districts which others had appropriated for themselves. He began to find more intelligence in the natives of the islands which he visited, than had been exhibited by those of Cuba, and received intimations of land still further west where copper and gold were in abundance.

An old Indian made a rough map of the main shore. Columbus took him on board, and proceeding onward, landing was made August 14th on the coast of Honduras. And three days later he landed fifteen leagues further east and took possession of the country in the name of

*Narrative and Critical History of America.

Spain. Columbus was lying ill in his bed, placed on deck ; they still sailed south till they reached the coast of Costa Rica. In this region Columbus dallied, not suspecting how thin the strip of country was that separated him from the great ocean.

CHAPTER XXII

TROUBLES WITH THE NATIVES—OJEDA AND CAO- NABO

The troubles alluded to as occurring at the Fort St. Thomas, demand a special notice on account of their bearing on the strained relations of the Spaniards and the natives. When Columbus left the fort he placed in command a man named Margarite, who organized an expedition for the purpose of plundering the natives, leaving the famous cavalier, Ojeda, in charge of the fort. He took with him the largest portion of the garrison, and then descended into the rich valley of the Vega.

Margarite at once gave loose reins to his avarice, and sensuality. The Indians received them, at first, with unbounded hospitality, supplying the Spanish force with provisions to the best of their ability. But Margarite had no sense of gratitude or decency. When the scant stores of the natives grew scantier, he

wrested supplies from them with acts of violence. His greed for gold led him to resort to bold, open robbery, in which he enacted the role of a highwayman, a footpad, and a burglar. Nor was this all of his iniquitous outrages; not satisfied with impoverishing the natives by forcibly wrenching from them their supplies of food, and wringing from them their gold ornaments by force and torture, he outraged their domestic relations by sacrificing the women to his lusts.

Revolts on the parts of the natives broke out in various portions of the island. The Spaniards defied all order and discipline, broke up into small bands, and scattered wherever there was booty to be found, or women to be outraged. So long as the Spaniards moved in a single body, the Indians dared not resist them; but when they began to scatter, the natives gained courage, and attacked them in detail. A cacique, named Guatiguana, slaughtered ten Spaniards who had forced themselves, on his village and offended his people by their licentiousness.

The same cacique followed up this act by setting fire to a house in which forty-six soldiers were quartered. He surrounded a small fort which had lately been erected on the Vega,

and prevented the garrison from obtaining supplies.

The deadliest enemy of the hated Spaniard was the Carib cacique, Caonaba, who has before been referred to. His dominions were in the vicinity of Fort St. Thomas, and Margarite took away so large a portion of the garrison, he thought the opportunity a good one to attack the fort, now defended by only a limited force.

Ojeda was in command: He had been in the war with the Moors, and was a skilled soldier. What he lacked in men he made up in daring audacity, dash and cunning.

Herrera thus speaks of him at this period: "He was versed in all kinds of feints, stratagems, lurking ambuscades and wild assaults. No man was, therefore, better fitted to cope with Indian warriors. He had a headlong courage, arising partly from natural heat and violence in his disposition and in a great measure from religious superstition.

"He had been engaged in wars with Moors and Indians, in public battles, and private combats, in fights, feuds, and encounters of all kinds, to which he had been prompted by a rash and fiery spirit, and a love of adventure; yet he never had been wounded nor lost a drop

of blood. He began to doubt whether any weapon had power to harm him, and to consider himself under the especial protection of the Holy Virgin.

"As a kind of religious talisman, he had a small Flemish painting of the Virgin, given him by his patron, Fonesca, bishop of Rada-joz. This he constantly carried with him in city, camp, or field, making it the object of frequent orisons and invocations. In garrison or in encampment, it was suspended in his tent; in his rough expeditions in the wilderness, he carried it in his knapsack, and whenever the time permitted, he would take it out, fix it on a tree, and address his prayers to this military patroness.

"In a word, he swore by the Virgin, he invoked the Virgin whether in brawl or battle, and under the favor of the Virgin he was ready for any enterprise or adventure. Such was Alonzo de Ojeda; bigoted in his devotion, reckless in his life, fearless in his spirit, like many of the roving Spanish cavaliers of that day. Though small in stature, he was a prodigy in strength and prowess; and the chroniclers of the early discoveries relate marvels of his valor and exploits."

This is a graphic and pleasing picture of one

of the most famous of the Spanish hidalgos who accompanied Columbus in his explorations.

Caonabo, barring the tincture of superstition, was among the natives something of the same daring, reckless, audacious kind of warrior that was Ojeda among the Spaniards. With the same discipline, experience, arms, and other military appliances, he would have proven himself the equal in warlike feats of the other.

Having carefully examined Fort St. Thomas, Caonabo gathered a formidable force, amounting in all to ten thousand men who were armed with clubs, bows and arrows, and firehardened lances, and marched to pit these primitive weapons and the naked bodies of his men against the cross-bows, the cannon, the arquebuses, and the steel corselets of the Spaniards. Finding the garrison all within the walls of the fort, which he could not penetrate, he distributed his forces about the works with a view of starving the inmates into surrender.

He did succeed in reducing them to great straits, and would have captured the place had it not been for the constant sallies led by Ojeda, in which the Indians were slaughtered in great numbers, he was always in the van, went where the Indians were thickest, and never received a wound. The Indians became discouraged,

deserted in large numbers, and then, Caonaba, at the very time when the garrison was suffering from famine, withdrew his army.

Caonaba afterward tried to form a league of the caciques of the island for the purpose of exterminating the Spaniards. But three others consented to take part in the plot. One who steadfastly refused, was the cacique, Guacanagari, the one who was accused by the friar, Boyle, of having assisted in the destruction of La Navidad, thus conclusively demonstrating that the suspicion against him was without foundation. He cared for one hundred Spaniards, during the period when Caonaba was trying to form a hostile league, and thereby drew on him the vengeance of the Carib chief, and his brother-in-law, Behechio, who repeatedly raided Guacanagari's territories, killing and robbing. Among their victims was one of the cacique's wives who was killed by Behechio, while Caonaba carried off another one of them as a prisoner.

Still the cacique never varied in his loyalty to the Spaniards. He was the alleged traitor to whom Inquisitor Boyle wished to apply the thumb-screw and the fagot.

CHAPTER XXIII

LAST DAYS OF COLUMBUS IN THE NEW WORLD— RETURNS TO SPAIN

After having so narrowly failed in the discovery of the mainland, Columbus followed the coast of Costa Rica until he reached Porto Bello, where he found houses and orchards. Along the gulf side of the Panama isthmus he encountered storms that forced him into various harbors, in all of which he saw regions of great fertility and richness. A long series of explorations were made, when finally Columbus returned to Jamaica. His ships were weather-beaten and worm-eaten. He abandoned one of them, a caravel at Porto Bello, and at Jamaica beached two others. A year of disappointment, grief and want followed, during which he clung to his wrecked vessels. Ovando at Hispaniola, heard of his straits, but only tardily and scantily relieved him.

Some ships were at last sent him by the

admiral's agent at Santo Domingo, and brought him and his companions to that place, where Ovando lodged and cared for him until Columbus departed for Spain September 12th, 1504. The arrival of the two vessels at Jamaica which were to take him to Santo Domingo, made an immense difference in his situation. He had been living in a wreck for over a year, and had suffered indescribable hardships, including impaired health and the hatred and persecution of the officials at Jamaica.

As he approached Santo Domingo, Columbus became oppressed by an apprehension that he would not be well received by the people. The settlement had been the very centre of hatred and opposition to him at a time when he was at the very height of his power; and as was said by a Spanish writer: "he had been hurried from it in ignominious chains, amidst the shouts and taunts of the triumphant rabble; he had been excluded from its harbor when, as commander of a squadron, he craved shelter from an impending tempest; but now that he arrived in its waters, a broken-down and shipwrecked man, all past hostility was overpowered by the popular sense of his late disasters. There was a momentary burst of enthusiasm in his favor; what had been denied to his merits

was gained by his misfortunes; and even the envious, appeased by his present reverses, seemed to forgive him for having once been so triumphant."

Although Ovando treated him with apparent good-feeling, the admiral, according to his son, always believed that his fidelity was assumed. Hence the sojourn of Columbus at Santo Domingo afforded him but little satisfaction. In a letter to his son he speaks about his grief at the desolation of the island by the oppressive treatment of the natives, and the horrible massacre that had been perpetrated by Ovando and his agents. He had fondly hoped, he says, at one time, to render the natives civilized, industrious, and tributary subjects to the crown, and to derive from their well-regulated labor, a great and steady revenue.

How different had been the event! The five great tribes that had peopled the mountains and valleys at the time of the discovery, and rendered by their mingled towns and villages, and tracts of cultivation, the rich levels of the Vega so many "painted gardens," had almost all passed away, and the native princes had perished chiefly by violence or ignominious death.

Columbus complained in subsequent letters to the sovereigns that the public business was

badly managed, that the ore collected lay unguarded in large quantities in houses slightly built and thatched, inviting depredation; that Ovando was unpopular, the people were dissolute, and the property of the crown and the security of the island in continual risk of mutiny and sedition.

In later letters he accuses Ovando of having neglected, if not sacrificed, his interests during his long absence, and of having impeded those who had been appointed to attend to his concerns. All these things induced Columbus to desire to hasten his departure from the island. That Columbus had the sympathy of Isabella in the misunderstanding between the admiral and Ovanda, is shown by letters in which she writes to Ovando on the 27th of November, 1503, expressly commanding him to observe the capitulations granted to Columbus; to respect his agents and to facilitate, instead of obstructing his concerns. These letters show the personal interest taken by Isabella in the affairs of Columbus during his absence.

Before he returned to Spain, the ship in which he had been brought from Jamaica was repaired and fitted out, and in this Columbus embarked with his son and servants. His great liberality was shown in the fact that the necessi-

ties of many of his late crew who were in poverty at Santo Domingo, were relieved from his own purse, and that he advanced the necessary funds to pay the passage of those who wished to return to Spain. From the day of his sailing for Spain, he was beaten by tempests during almost every hour of his passage, until they reached the Spanish coast. The mainmast was sprung in four places during one storm, and although Columbus was confined to his bed at the time, by his advice the damage was repaired; the mast was shortened and fortified by wood taken from the cabins, and the whole was well secured by cords. They were still more damaged in another tempest, in which the foremast was sprung. In this crippled state they had to traverse seven hundred leagues of stormy ocean.

"Fortune continued to persecute Columbus to the end of this, his last and most disastrous expedition," says Las Casas. "For several weeks he was tempest-tossed—suffering at the same time the most excruciating pains from his malady—until, on the 7th day of November, his crazy and shattered bark anchored in the harbor of San Lucar. From here he had himself conveyed to Seville, where he hoped to enjoy repose of mind and body, and to recruit

his health after such a long series of fatigues, anxieties, and hardships."

Weakness and sickness kept him in his bed at Seville, the place that he had looked forward to as a haven of rest. Anxiety and care hung to him by land as well as by sea. A difference in the places which he occupied simply varied the nature of his distress. He found all his affairs in confusion. His rents and dues had not been properly collected at Santo Domingo, remaining in the hands of Ovando. He pleaded that a letter might be written by the king commanding the payment of the arrears without delay; for his agents would not venture to even speak to Ovando on the subject.

"I have much vexation from the governor," says he in a letter to his son Diego. "All tell me that I have there eleven or twelve thousand castillanos; and I have not received a quarter. I know well, that, since my departure he must have received upward of five thousand castillanos."

The rank of Columbus involved large expenditures, and he was supposed to be the possessor of inexhaustible wealth, which was not true, as his income was precarious and scanty. His last voyage had exhausted his accumulations, and involved him in debt. All the money he

had been able to collect in Hispaniola, to the amount of twelve hundred castillanos, had been expended in bringing home members of his crew who were in distress. At this period he was absolutely in want. He urges his son Diego to economize until he can secure the payment of his arrears.

"I received nothing of the revenue due to me," says he in one letter to his son; "I live by borrowing. Little have I profited by twenty years of service, with such toils and perils; since at present I do not own a roof in Spain. If I desire to eat or sleep, I have no resort but an inn; and for the most times, have not the wherewithal to pay my bill."

CHAPTER XXIV

CLOSING DAYS OF COLUMBUS—DEATH OF ISABELLA

The closing days of Columbus grew more and more distressing as the end of his life approached. Despite the fact that he suffered acutely from a complication of diseases, including the gout, and from an intense mental strain, he did not forget the wrongs inflicted upon others, especially his crew, and did not cease to urge on the sovereigns to pay them their arrears. "They are poor," said he, "as it is now nearly three years since they left their homes. They have endured infinite toils and perils, and they bring in valuable tidings for which their majesties ought to give thanks to God and rejoice."

It speaks well for his innate generosity for these poor sailors, for many of those whom he was soliciting justice, had been his enemies. While engaged in this effort to secure the back payments of the crews, he gave a great deal of

attention to his own case. So far as the record shows he laid very little stress upon pecuniary remuneration for himself. What he most sought for in this direction, was the restoration of his dignities which he regarded as the evidences of his great achievements. In this direction he had been constantly and scandalously deceived by Ferdinand, who had promised him that his offices and dignities should be restored to him. He felt, in a strong degree, that so long as they were withheld from him, it was a stain upon his reputation.

"Had he not," says a writer, "been proudly impatient on the subject, he would have belied the loftiest part of his character; for he who can be indifferent to the wreath of triumph, is deficient in the noble ambition which incites to glorious deeds."

The intelligence which he received from the Court was irritating and unsatisfactory. He knew that there was powerful opposition against him, which was always prepared to make the worst of the situation so far as it applied to him; and he knew that it was a matter of the greatest importance that he should attend the Court in person to defend his own case. He made an attempt to reach their majesties, but his illness and the inclemency of winter effec-

tively prevented him from making the journey.

He was very much worried at the outbreaks in Jamaica, which might be construed by those who hated him into charges against his character. Diego Menzes and Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal and Geronimo, all active friends of Columbus, were at Court. He wrote to his son Diego to call upon them for their good offices. "I have served their majesties," said he, "with as much zeal and diligence as if it had been to gain Paradise; and if I have failed in anything, it has been because my knowledge and powers went no further."

With a very slight difference, the case of Columbus in his humiliation and the neglect which characterized the treatment of him suggests to a considerable extent an almost similar condition presented by Cardinal Woolsey. The one was appealing to Ferdinand, the other to Henry VIII. and both found only an atrocious ingratitude for lives devoted to the service of the very men who were engaged in crushing them.

It is very difficult for the imagination to conceive the broad difference between the Columbus of 1492, and the same character in 1504. The one was the favorite of the sovereigns, was permitted to sit in their presence,

was inundated with honors, titles, and dignity ; was admired by scientific men of all Europe, and for the time being probably stood higher than any other man in civilization in the esteem of the people. The latter was a weak, wretched invalid ; the former was a tall, robust, virile man. The one could command his own entrance into Court in the presence of royalty ; the other was met by contemptible subterfuges, and was tabooed as if he had been a poisonous reptile.

His anxiety to get to Court became every day more intense. He was carried to the door in a litter, but his health was feeble and the winter so bleak and trying, that he was obliged to abandon the effort. His ability to write letters to the sovereigns began to lessen, for he could only write at night, as at other times, his malady deprived him of the use of his hands. Bad news came incessantly from the Court ; the machinations of his foes were becoming stronger and stronger, and Ferdinand treated his applications with absolute indifference, while the queen was prostrated with a fatal illness. Repelled by Ferdinand, Columbus placed his sole reliance for justice in Queen Isabella. "May it please the Holy Trinity," say he, "to restore our sovereign queen to health ; for by her will

everything be adjusted which is now in confusion."

It is sad to be obliged to state that while Columbus was writing this pathetic supplication for the recovery of his benefactress, she was lying a corpse in the royal palace.

The health of Isabella had been injured by repeated domestic afflictions. She lost by death her only son, Prince Juan, and her daughter and warmest friend, the Princess Isabella; and last, death visited her a third time and took away Prince Miguel, who was the prospective heir of the throne. These burdens were not apparently sufficient, for she was constantly oppressed by the conviction of the weakness of intellect of her daughter Juana, and the domestic unhappiness of that princess with her husband, Archduke Philip.

It was said by a writer that, "the desolation which walks through palaces does not permit the familiar sympathies and sweet consolation which alleviate the sorrows of common life. Isabella pined in state, amidst the obsequious homages of the Court, surrounded by the trophies of a glorious and successful reign, and placed at the summit of earthly grandeur. A deep and incurable melancholy settled upon her, which undermined her constitution, and gave a fatal acute-

ness to her bodily maladies. She died Nov. 26th, 1504, at Medina del Campo, in the fifty-fourth year of her age, after an illness of four months.

Long before her eyes closed on the world she had ceased to regard its allurements and vanities.

"Let my body," she said in her will, "be interred in the monastery of San Francisco, which is in the Alhambra of the city of Grenada, in a low sepulchre, without any monument except a plain stone, with the inscription cut on it. But I desire and command that, if the king, my lord, should choose his sepulchre in any church or monastery, in any other part of these my kingdoms, my body may be transported thither, and buried beside the body of his highness; so that the union that we have enjoyed while living, and which, with the mercy of God, we hope our souls will experience in Heaven, may be repeated by our bodies in the earth."

The intelligence of the death of Isabella reached Columbus when he was writing the letter to his son Diego. "A memorial," he writes in the postscript, "for thee, my dear son Diego, of what is at present to be done. The principal thing is to commend affectionately and with great devotion, the soul of the

queen, our sovereign, to God. Her life was always Catholic and holy, and prompt to all things in the holy service; for this reason we may rest assured that she is received into His glory, and beyond the care of this rough and weary world. The next thing is to watch and labor in all matters for the service of our sovereign, the king, and to alleviate his grief. His majesty is the head of Christendom. Remember the proverb which says: 'When the head suffers all the members suffer.' Therefore all good Christians should pray for his health and long life, and we who are in his employ, ought more than others to do this with all study and diligence."

CHAPTER XXV

COLUMBUS SEES FERDINAND—TREATED WITH COLD CONTEMPT

The death of Isabella carried into the grave the prospects of Columbus. He did not, it is true, yield at once, and although despairing, and sunken into depths of despondency, he determined, as a last resort, to make an appeal to Ferdinand. During the winter following the death of the queen, he was confined by his malady to his bed, and once more resorted to letter-writing for the purpose of securing redress from the crown.

It was at this period that Columbus employed as one of his messengers to the Court, a character whose fame is but little less brilliant than that which enveloped Columbus; in fact, there are those who give him a higher place. It was Amerigo Vespucci. There is no necessity for a discussion in this work of the claims of this

person for an alleged priority in the discovery of the continent. For four hundred years the problem has been discussed without any settled conclusion, and there is no possible reason why an equal number of years of similar argument will dispose of the knotty question.

When Columbus made his final effort to get a hearing from Ferdinand, he was supported in his efforts by Diego de Deza, the bishop of Palencia, who was the friar who had advocated the adoption of his plans when they were presented before the Junta of Salamanca. Columbus sent his son Diego to learn from the bishop whether or not the queen had made a will.

"Two things," he said, "require particular attention. Ascertain whether the queen who is now with God, has said anything concerning me in her testament; and stimulate the bishop of Palencia, he who was the cause that their highnesses obtained possession of the Indies, who induced me to remain in Castile when I was on the road to leave it. If the bishop of Palencia has arrived, or should arrive, tell him how much I have been gratified by his prosperity, and that if I come, I shall lodge with his grace, even though he should not invite me, for we must return to our ancient, fraternal affection."

All the appeals of Columbus were listened to with contemptuous indifference, or not at all. In no particulars to the affairs, condition, or management of officers of the New World was he given any information. He was totally ignored. He endeavored in various matters to vary certain official appointments, or to protest against some contemplated action which, from his experience in Indian complications, he knew to be wrong.

After a considerable period had elapsed, and Columbus was slowly dying of chagrin and humiliation, by a royal order, issued probably at the solicitation of the Bishop of Placentia, he was given permission to come to the Court, which was then being held at Segovia. As a concession to his age and illness, permission was issued from the Court, to allow him to travel on a mule, a practice then forbidden, as it had the effect to interfere with the rearing of saddle-horses.

It was not till May, 1505, that he was able to make the journey. The facts just presented concerning his stay at Seville, after the return from his fourth and last voyage, contradict the statement commonly made that he was at that place recuperating by a quiet rest. And he, who, a few years ago had entered Barcelona

in triumph, now poor, broken down, humiliated, despairing, entered Segovia without the greeting of a single friend in the royal crowd.

When he appeared in Court, he received none of the attention to which his long and arduous services were entitled. The king professed to feel kindly toward him ; but unmistakably without any sincerity. Columbus related to the king a narrative of his last voyage, the new lands he had explored ; but his listener was cold and indifferent. In regard to this interview, Las Casas said :

"I do not know what caused this dislike, and this lack of princely countenance of the king toward one who had rendered him such prominent benefits ; unless that his mind was swayed by the false testimony which had been brought against the admiral ; of which I have been able to learn something from persons much in favor of the sovereigns."

Columbus offered to submit the difference between them to his friend, the arch-bishop of Seville, Don Diego de Deza, when the king suggested arbitration. The king consented, but presented issues which he knew Columbus would not accept, as for instance, the question of restoring him to the rank of viceroy which the admiral declined to discuss, as he believed that

the dignity had been conferred on him in a manner that made of it an inalienable right. All that he insisted on was that his titles should be respected as the result of a solemn agreement in the nature of a treaty. Months were expended in an effort to move the king, but to no avail, "as far as actions went," says Las Casas, "the king not merely showed him no signs of favor, but, on the contrary, discountenanced him as much as possible ; yet he was never wanting in complimentary expressions.

A long time passed, and Columbus continued to receive smooth words from the king, but nothing more substantial. His claims were finally referred to a tribunal called "The council of the discharges of the conscience of the king and the deceased queen." Two sessions were held, but nothing came of it for the reason that those composing it knew too well the wishes of Ferdinand.

"It was believed," says Las Casas, "that if the king could have done so with a safe conscience, and without detriment to his fame, he would have respected few or none of the privileges which he and the queen had conceded to the admiral, and which had so justly been merited."

Columbus continued to hope against hope,

and flattered himself with the belief that when the daughter of the queen, Juana, wife of the king, Philip of Flanders was to take the place of her mother as queen of Castile, the breach might be healed. Nothing came from the presence of the new queen. The admiral then tried to secure the succession of his titles for his son, Diego ; and this, like all his efforts, since his return from his last voyage, was a total failure.

Columbus became discouraged. He was suffering from a most painful and fatal illness, and at last ceased his stubborn contest. He wrote to Diego de Deza, in which communication he gave utterance to his despair. He said: "It appears to me that his Majesty objects to fulfill that, which he, with the queen, promised me by word and seal. For me to contend with the contrary would be to contend with the wind. I have done all I could do. I leave the rest to God, whom I have ever found propitious to my necessities."

CHAPTER XXVI

DEATH OF THE EXPLORER

The embers of the flame of life of Columbus had nearly reached extinction, when for a moment they blazed up with something like the old energy. The arrival of king Philip and Queen Juana was the occasion of the revivication. They had just come to take possession of the throne of Castile. In the daughter of Isabella he was certain that he would once more find a friend in whose kindness he would secure support. Columbus would have gladly gone to meet the couple, but a recurrence of his illness prevented him from leaving his bed. And so helpless was he in his situation that he could not dispense with the services of his son Diego. He therefore delegated his brother, who was his main reliance, to represent him and to offer his congratulations.

Columbus sent a letter to the new king and

queen, in which he expressed his sorrow that he was too ill to come in person to present his gratification at their accession to the throne, and begged them to regard him as one of the most loyal of their subjects. He furthermore expressed a wish in his letter that they would do him the justice to restore him his honors and estates, assuring them that though prostrated by a severe illness, he was certain that he would yet be able to perform even greater labor than any which he had hitherto accomplished.

This was the last supreme effort of the dying explorer; it exhibited a spirit which, without regarding age and infirmities, and all humiliation and mortification gave his last utterances with all the confidence he had exhibited in his best days; and spoke of still greater explorations as if he stood at the height of a vigorous life. The Adelantado bade his brother good-bye, whom he was never to see again alive, and started out on his mission. He met with the most cordial reception. The young couple gave the closest attention to the reports, and every assertion was to the effect that there would be a concession to the demands of the admiral.

Columbus' troubles were about at an end.

The flash of the expiring flame was smothered by increasing illness. Scarcely had his brother left when his malady increased in violence. His voyages, especially the last one, had ruined beyond repair a constitution already impaired by arduous labor; and incessant anxieties prevented his enjoyment of that rest so essential to recruit the weariness and depression of age. The action of Ferdinand, his hypocrisy, his evasion broke his heart. The suspension of his titles, the enmity and contempt which he had experienced, the popular detraction of which he was the object, had overshadowed the great ambition which had been the purpose of his life. It may be that he had a prescience that this obscurity would not be permanent; but sometime in the distance a glorious light would illuminate his career.

Knowing that he was about to die, he made preparations to leave his business in shape for the benefit of his successor. Among other bequests on the fourth of May, he wrote a testamentary codicil on a blank page of a little prayer-book given him by Pope Alexander VI. He left this book to the public of Genoa, and made that province the successor of his privileges and dignities, in case of the running out of his male line. Another provision of this codi-

cil was the construction of a hospital in the city of Genoa, the funds to be taken from his property in Italy.

Among writers the authenticity of this document is disputed. "It is not, however," says a writer, "of much importance. The paper is such as might readily have been written by a person such as Columbus, in the paroxysm of disease, when he imagined his end suddenly approaching, and shows the affection with which his thoughts were bent on his native city. It is termed among commentators a military codicil, because testamentary dispositions of this kind are executed by a soldier at the point of death, without the usual formalities required by the civil law. About two weeks afterward, on the eve of his death, he executed a final and regularly authenticated codicil, in which he bequeaths his dignities and estates with better judgment."

This final codicil of Columbus, made as he stood with one foot in the grave, is creditable to all the better qualities of the great explorer. In case he died without male issue the estate was to go to his brother Don Fernando, and in case he failed of issue, passing to his uncle, Don Bartholomew, and always going to the nearest male heir. And were there a lack of

male descendents, it was to go to the female of the closest kin. All his heirs must be devoted at all times to serve the king and promote the Christian faith. Liberal allowances were made for poor relatives and others in necessity.

His son was ordered to build a chapel in Hispaniola, in the town of Conception, in the Vega, where masses should be performed daily for the repose of the souls of himself, his mother, wife, and others who died in the faith. Among the closing items were several small sums to be paid to people at different points without their being told where they came from. One of these was half a mark of silver to a poor Jew who lived in Lisbon.

Having thus attended to the disposition of his personal possessions, Columbus received the holy sacrament, and performed all the pious duties of a devout Christian, and died on the 20th of May, 1506, being about seventy years of age. His last words were: "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."

His body was deposited in the convent of San Francisco, and the funeral services held at Valladolid. In 1513 they were removed to the Carthusian monastery of Las Cuevas at Seville, to the chapel of St. Anne, in which was also deposited the body of his son Don

Diego. In 1536 the bodies of Columbus and his son were removed to Hispaniola, and interred in the principal chapel of the Cathedral of San Domingo. But even here they did not rest in quiet, having been again disinterred and conveyed to Havana on the island of Cuba.

In 1795 all the Spanish possessions in the island of Hispaniola were ceded to France, at the termination of the war between France and Spain. This same year it is said that the body of Columbus "was again moved to Cuba," which would permit the inference that since the removal two hundred and fifty years before to Cuba, the body had been removed at least once to some place not mentioned.

It may be said at this point that there is much uncertainty as to where Columbus really is buried. There is no certainty that the remains exhumed at San Domingo were those of the great discoverer. In fact the question is an open one. So many years had elapsed, nearly three hundred, that the graves in the church must have long since become impaired and disintegrated, permitting no certainty that the ashes taken were those of Columbus.

CHAPTER XXVII

SOME ESTIMATES OF THE CHARACTER OF COLUMBUS

As was said in the opening chapter of this biography, Columbus was a man of diverse and contradictory qualities. He was great in some things, and infinitely little in others. One admirable quality that he possessed in great and unvarying quantity was humanity and a warm, benevolent consideration of the rights and customs and feelings of the natives whom he discovered. There is not the slightest stain of blood on his garments; he was Christ-like in his gentleness, his patience, his regard of the primitive people whom he brought into contact with civilization.

In this particular he was not representative of the large element of Spaniards whom his explorations brought into contact with the Indians. He stood almost isolated in his attitude; the others were characterized by rapacious greed, the most intolerable cruelty, the most

total disregard of the property, the family rights, the lives of the native inhabitants. He left among the aborigines love, respect, confidence; they strewed their progress with the blackened ruins of burned huts, with gashed bodies, with trails of blood; where they found peace, they distributed desolation.

Apart from this single quality of a humane regard for the Indians, Columbus was very uneven in his development. He did not hesitate to deceive his crew about the distance they had reached on their first voyage; or to force his men to sign papers certifying that they had seen the mainland of Asia, when each of them well knew that he was subscribing to a falsehood.

That he had no ability to control men is shown conclusively by the acts of his subordinates so soon as his back was turned and they were left to themselves. There were mutiny, and revolt even under his eyes on his first voyage; Pinzon ran off with one-third of his fleet; La Navidad, drew on itself annihilation by its robberies and gross licentiousness; in fine, in a very brief period, the region which he discovered, and as an Eden when he found it, became suddenly a hell under his administration.

In view of this conspicuous lack of administrative ability; seeing that the colonies went

to decay ; that his men died like rotten sheep ; that his supplies of food were generally insufficient ; and this universal, disastrous failure was known to all Spain, as it must, or should have been known to Columbus himself, there is something mean, grasping, almost swinish in the pertinacity with which he hounded the Spanish sovereigns to restore his forfeited rank and income.

It cannot but be that he was possessed by a self-conceit that refused to see the colossal failure of his attempt at the government of his colonies. Ferdinand, however great his duplicity in his final treatment of Columbus, is not without his apologists. He was sufficiently Jesuitical in his nature to smile, and use flattering words to a man whom he disliked ; but despite these hypocrisies, he knew Columbus well enough to comprehend that it was not the fair thing to do, to burden all succeeding Spanish generations with wealth, titles, honors for the labor, albeit vast, performed in the discovery of the West Indies.

It is a fair question as to whether Columbus was not well paid for what he had done. He exhibited no more than a very high order of daring as a navigator. His purpose in the enterprise was not one which involved the dis-

covery of a new continent, but to get a shorter route to an old one. His project was not the scheme of a great geographer, but that of a navigator anxious to increase his wealth by opening up a permanent and lucrative occupation.

He did not have in view a new world. What he was allured by were the exaggerations and fables of Mandeville, and Marco Polo, the fairy city of Cipango, with its marvelous extent of opulence and beauty, Prester John, a white native of interior India, and the Khan of Tartary, still another creation of romancers, and Munchausens. These impossibilities, these absurdities are what he sailed after; he discovered a few hundred islands, and died believing he had reached India, and never dreaming of the existence of the great northern continent, against which he almost ran the prows of his crude vessel.

It cannot but be conceded that he was intensely religious, although, there was in his piety an element of gross superstition. It is seen how in emergencies, during tempestuous weather, for instance, lots were drawn to see who should make a pilgrimage to some remote shrine of Virgin or saint, to placate the powers and allay the storms. In one instance in 1451,

Columbus saw a water-spout approaching which could only be averted by reading the gospel of St. John.

His bigotry sometimes displaced his gentleness and humane regard for the natives; they must be converted at all hazards, death or slavery included. He sent some large numbers of Indians with the recommendation that efforts should be made to convert them, failing in which they should be sold into slavery. He had all the fanatical intolerance in regard to the conversion of the irreligious entertained by the infamous ministers of the Inquisition. Merciful in his ordinary treatment of them, he was implacable and merciless in the matter of their conversion to Christianity. It is not on record that despite all his efforts, and the hordes of priests that accompanied him on his later expeditions, but one convert was made, and who took the first opportunity on his return from Spain, to swim ashore in the night and disappear in the forests, and was never after seen to be recognized by white men.

There was one convert, who fled; there were hundreds of whites killed by Indians, who were driven into hostilities, and thousands of natives who were mercilessly massacred during the reign of Columbus over the islands.

Winsor says in a summary on the multifarious qualities of Columbus ; "If his mental and moral equipoise had been as true, and his judgment as clear as his spirit was lofty and impressive, he could have controlled the actions of men as readily as he subjected their imagination to his will, and more than one brilliant opportunity for a record befitting a ruler of men would not have been lost.

"The world always admires constancy and zeal: but when it is fed, not by well-rounded performance, but by self-satisfaction and self-interest, and tarnished by deceit, we lament where we would approve. Columbus' imagination was eager, and ungovernable. It led him to a great discovery, which he was not looking for; and he was far enough right to make his error more emphatic. He is certainly not alone among the great men of the world's regard who have some of the attributes of the small and mean."

THE END









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